credits, etc.

contributors:

basil elias
matthew mullinnix
matthew campbell
jeff ott
chris dixon
sam pullen

this project started from the conversations, friendships, dedication and work that many of us have shared together. our work with this 'zine is embedded deeply into the fabric of our lives.

for more copies of this 'zine,
call the men's center
(360)866-6000 x 6480

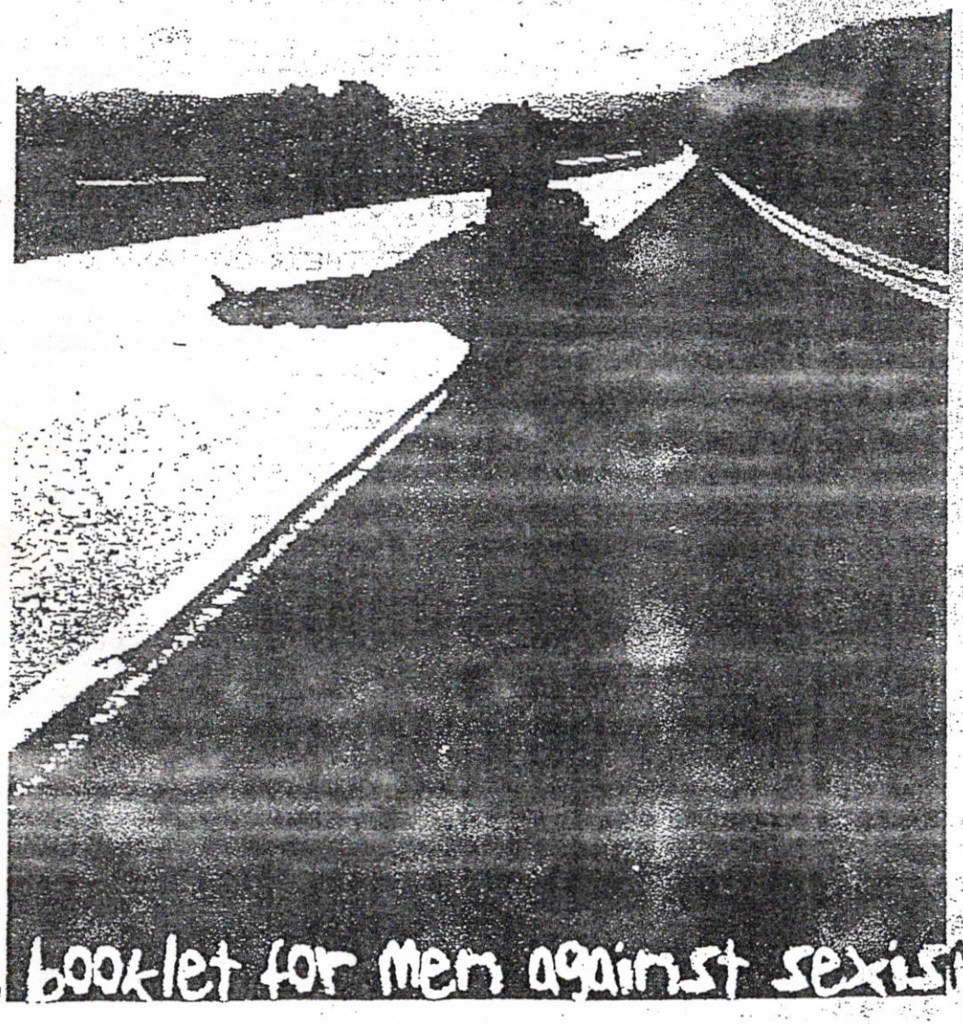
or write to:

planting seeds press
p.o.box 33368
austin, tx 78764



pay what you can

on the Road to Healing:



a booklet for men against sexism.

VBH



"FEMINISTS LONG FOR MEN TO HEAL... WE DREAM OF A WORLD FULL OF MEN WHO COULD BE PASSIONATE LOVERS, GROUNDED IN THEIR OWN BODIES, CAPABLE OF PROFOUND LOVES AND DEEP SORROWS, STRONG ALLIES OF WOMEN, SENSITIVE NURTURERS, FEARLESS DEFENDERS OF ALL PEOPLE'S LIBERATION, UNBOUND BY STIFLING CONVENTION YET RESPECTFUL OF THEIR OWN AND OTHERS' BOUNDARIES, SERIOUS WITHOUT BEING HUMORLESS, STABLE WITHOUT BEING DULL, DISCIPLINED WITHOUT BEING RIGID, SWEET WITHOUT BEING SPINELESS, PROUD WITHOUT BEING INSUFFERABLY EGOTISTICAL, FIERCE WITHOUT BEING VIOLENT, WILD WITHOUT BEING, WELL, ASSHOLES."

STARHAWK

FROM HER ESSAY "A MEN'S MOVEMENT I COULD TRUST"

HEY BROTHER

HOW DOES IT FEEL TO STAND ALONE
NEXT TO SO MANY OTHERS?
HOW DOES IT FEEL TO STAND UP TALL,
WHEN YOU'RE BREAKING DOWN INSIDE?

HOW DOES IT FEEL TO BE THE ONE
WHO LET'S YOURSELF DOWN?
HOW DOES IT FEEL-
THE SORROW?

I HEARD A CRY ONE NIGHT
I THOUGHT IT CAME FROM FAR AWAY.
I HEARD A CRY ONE NIGHT
IT CAME FROM DEEP INSIDE MYSELF.
I TRIED TO MAKE IT SEEM LIKE EVERYTHING WAS ALL RIGHT.
I PRETEND I'M ALL RIGHT WHEN I'M HURTING DEEP INSIDE.

WHAT WOULD IT FEEL LIKE IF WE LET GO OF ALL THE PAIN WE FEEL?
WHAT WOULD IT FEEL LIKE TO CRY AGAIN?
IF I NEED SUPPORT FROM SOMEONE, I WANT TO COME TO YOU.
CAN WE TRY TO FEEL LOVE AGAIN?

HEY BROTHER,
CAN YOU TELL ME WHERE THE PAIN IS?
'CAUSE I WANT TO BE THERE IN FINDING IT.
HEY BROTHER
WHAT DO YOU FEEL WHEN YOU DON'T SAY A THING?
'CAUSE I'M DYING TO KNOW IF YOU FEEL WHAT I FEEL.

(A SONG) BY BASIL ELIAS.

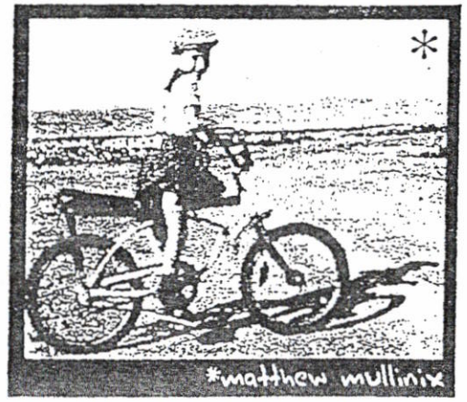
Afterward

I've been working on this zine since March 1998 and it is now January 1999. For a while I was struggling with how much I should edit the individual works and the entire content of this zine, thus transforming this zine into the beginning works of a book. I finally decided to leave a lot of it how it is and to print it as such, because that is the true elements of writing a zine- unpolished with the attempt to instigate dialogue.

With that in mind, I present to you this booklet. I hope that it transforms your life as it has with mine.

Before closing I want to take time here to thank all the contributors, editors, and general supporters of this project because without you it would not look as it does or be printed at all.

With dedication,
basil elias.



*matthew mullinix

GET IN TOUCH WITH ANY CONTRIBUTORS. ORDER MORE COPIES OF THIS ZINE. GIVE US FEEDBACK. PRAISE. CONCERN. CRITIQUES. ETC. BY WRITING TO THE FOLLOWING ADDRESS. THIS ZINE IS ONE DOLLAR THROUGH THE MAIL. WRITE FOR WHOLESALE RATES (FOR 5 OR MORE COPIES).

planting seeds press
post office box 33368
austin, texas 78764
U.S.A.
basils@usa.net

Introduction

HEY. WELCOME.... I DECIDED TO PUT TOGETHER THIS ZINE BECAUSE I WANTED TO COMPILE MY IDEAS ALONG WITH THE IDEAS OF MANY MEN AROUND ME. I WANTED US TO HAVE A SPACE TO SHOW OUR PROCESSES" SO WE COLD SHARE WHAT WE'VE GONE THROUGH" TO PRESENT THE LINK BETWEEN OUR HURT AS MEN AND THE OPPRESSION OF WOMEN." WE WANTED TO EXPLORE THESE IDEAS IN AN EFFORT TO CONTINUE THE DIALOGUE BETWEEN MEN AND WOMEN ABOUT SEXISM, RAPE, SEXUAL ASSAULT AND ABUSE.

THE LINK BETWEEN MEN'S HURT AND THE OPPRESSION OF WOMEN IS VITAL BECAUSE THIS IS THE THREAD THAT TIES US TOGETHER IN THE CYCLE OF VIOLENCE. HISTORICALLY, THE POWER DYNAMICS BETWEEN MEN AND WOMEN HAVE CONTRIBUTED TO THE CYCLE OF VIOLENCE WHICH BOTH OPPRESSES WOMEN AND KEEPS HURTING MEN. ONCE WE ACKNOWLEDGE THIS LINK, WE CAN CONTINUE OUR WORK TO HEAL OURSELVES AND THE WORLD IN WHICH WE LIVE.

THIS ZINE IS LAYED OUT IN FIVE CHAPTERS. GROWING UP MALE. CHANGING WAYS. MEN'S WORK. GETTING TO KNOW YOURSELF. AND SELECTED RESOURCES. THESE CHAPTERS PRESENT A PROCESS WHICH MOST MEN IN THIS ZINE HAVE BEGUN TO WORK THROUGH THEMSELVES.

GROWING UP MALE, WE LEARN TRAITS ASSOCIATED WITH MANHOOD" WE LEARN WHAT IT MEANS TO "BE A MAN." RECOGNIZING THESE TRAITS HAS BECOME A FIRST STEP IN THE ROAD TO HEALING. AS MEN, WE HAVE THE CHOICE TO SEE OUR SOCIALIZATION AS IT EFFECTS OUR LIVES. WE HAVE THE CHOICE TO NURTURE THE POSITIVE AND HEALTHY QUALITIES OF OUR SOCIALIZATION AS WELL AS TO CHANGE THE NEGATIVE AND DETRIMENTAL ASPECTS OF OUR SOCIALIZATION. THIS CHAPTER SHEDS LIGHT ON MANY MEN'S EXPERIENCES WITH GROWING UP MALE.

CHANGING WAYS REPRESENTS THE STORIES OF MEN CONFRONTING THEIR PASTS. THESE STORIES REPRESENT THE TURNING POINTS WHICH HAVE BEEN CRUCIAL FOR MEN TO SEE HOW SEXISM IS MANIFESTED IN THEIR LIVES AND TO BEGIN TO CHALLENGE THESE WAYS OF BEING. CHANGING WAYS IS A REPRESENTATION OF MAKING A COMMITMENT TO HEALING.

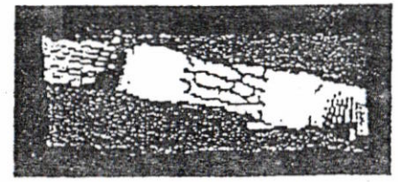
MEN'S WORK IS WHAT WE CAN DO, AS MEN, TO CHALLENGE SEXISM AND POWER IN OUR LIVES AND COMMUNITIES. THE TERM MEN'S WORK HAS TYPICALLY BEEN A TERM TO EXCLUDE WOMEN FROM CERTAIN KINDS OF WORK MANY PEOPLE DEEM MASCULINE (I.E. CONSTRUCTION, C.E.O OF A COMPANY, ETC.). ALSO, MANY PEOPLE IN THIS SOCIETY CONSIDER CHALLENGING SEXISM AND POWER TO BE WOMEN'S WORK. HOWEVER, WE ARE ASSERTING HERE THAT, LIKE ANTI-RACISM WORK BEING THE JOB OF WHITE PEOPLE, CHALLENGING SEXISM AND PROMOTING HEALTHY LIVES IS NOT ONLY THE JOB OF WOMEN. IT IS MEN'S WORK. THIS CHAPTER WILL HELP WITH THE "WHAT DO I DO NOW" QUESTIONS.

GETTING TO KNOW YOURSELF IS AN IMPORTANT STEP IN HEALING YOURSELF AND THE WORLD. AS PUBLIC ENEMY SAY "IF YOU DON'T KNOW YOURSELF THEN YOU'RE NOBODY." THESE QUESTIONS ARE A BEGINNING TOWARD SELF-AWARENESS. IF YOU TAKE THE TIME TO ANSWER THESE QUESTIONS, THEN I COMMEND YOUR DEDICATION TO THE PROCESS OF SELF-AWARENESS AND SELF-LOVE.

FINALLY, THE SELECTED RESOURCES WILL LEAD YOU TO MORE INFORMATION RELATED TO MANY TOPICS COVERED IN THIS ZINE. TAKE WHAT YOU LEARN FROM HERE AND EXPAND ONWARD TO MORE RESOURCES AND MORE KNOWLEDGE AND A GREATER UNDERSTANDING.

ONE LAST NOTE BEFORE I END THIS INTRODUCTION, ONE CHAPTER THAT WAS NOT INCLUDED BUT IS EXTREMELY RELEVANT IS ON THE POLITICAL REPERCUSSIONS OF SEXISM AND SEXUAL VIOLENCE. I SUGGEST THAT YOU READ MANY OF THE BOOKS IN THE RESOURCE LIST TO FURTHER RESEARCH THIS TOPIC. THIS ZINE WOULD BE NOTHING IF I HAD NOT LEARNED ABOUT HOW SEXISM AND SEXUAL VIOLENCE EFFECTS THE PEOPLE IN MY LIFE.

THANK YOU FOR ATTAINING THIS ZINE. IF YOU HAVE ANY COMMENTS, PLEASE FEEL FREE TO WRITE.



WITH LUCK
LOVE AND
TRUST,
BASIL ELIAS

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction

Growing Up Male-
writings on socialization and manhood. 5
"It's Good to Be the King" by Jeff Ott 6
"Talking About Our Lives" 7
"Men's Issues on Body Image" by Matthew Campbell 16
"Reflections on my Gender" by Chris Dixon 22
"Twenty Years Later" by Matthew Mullinix 23
"The Making of A Man" by Sam Pullen 26

Changing Ways-
re-defining manhood. 31
"Turning Point" by basil 32
"My Resistance to Feminism" 35

Men's Work- 39
The work we can do to end sexism in our lives and communities.
"Men's Work" by basil 40
"A (Pro) Feminist Men's Movement" by basil 41
"Standing Up to Say "No More"" 43
"Men Have the Choice to" 44
"Personal Goals to Ending Sexism" 45

Getting to Know Yourself- 47
Some questions to aid in the process of self-discovery.

Selected Resources- 53
More sources for further understanding of topics covered in this zine.

Afterward 58

Men to End Sexual Assault
P.O.Box 681
Cambridge, MA 02139
(617) 492-8306

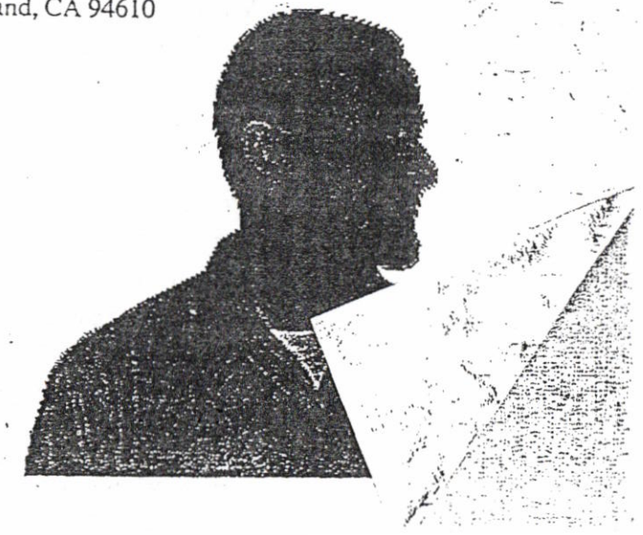
Real Men
P.O.Box 1769
Brookline, MA 02146
(617) 422-1650

D.C. Men Against Rape
c/o Washington Peace Center
2111 Florida Ave NW
Washington D.C. 20008
(202) 882-5898

Men Against Domestic Violence
32 West Anapamu St. #348
Santa Barbara, CA 93101
(805) 563-2651

The Men's Health Network
P.O.Box 770
Washington D.C. 20044-0770
(202) 543-6461

Oakland Men's Project
440 Grand Avenue Suite 320
Oakland, CA 94610



Some Web Resources:

-http://feminist.com/pro.htm
-http://www.cs.utk.edu/ bartley/sainfoPage.html
-http://idealist.com/wounded-healer/allies.html
-http://www.ibd.nrc.ca/ mansfield.feminism

Two Places to get a lot of Zines
(Send $1 for a catalog to)

Basement Children Zine Distribution
Post Office Box 479081
Chicago, IL 60647

Tree of Knowledge Zine Distribution
1010 Scott Street
Little Rock, AR 72202

Organizations:

National Coalition Against Domestic Violence
P.O.Box15127
Washington D.C. 20003
(202) 638-6388

Men's Anti-Rape Resource Center
P.O.Box 73559
Washington, D.C. 20056
(202) 529-7239

National Organization for Men Against Sexism (NOMAS)
54 Mint Street
San Francisco, CA 94103
(415) 546-6627

National Coalition Against Sexual Assault
3101 Richmond Ave, Suite 150
Washington, DC 77098
(713)528-6798

Growing up Male

writings on socialization and manhood.

"All the time I was growing up, I knew that there was something really problematic in my relationship to manhood. Inside, deep inside, I never believed I was fully male- I never believed I was growing up enough of a man. I believed that someplace out there, in other men, there was something that was genuine authentic all-american manhood- the real stuff- but I didn't have it: not enough of it to convince me anyway, even if I managed to be fairly convincing to those around me. I felt like an impostor, like a fake. I agonized a lot about not feeling male enough, and I had no idea then how much I was not alone.

Then I read those words- those words that suggested to me for the first time that the notion of manhood is a cultural delusion, a baseless belief, a false front, a house of cards. It's not true. The category I was trying so desperately to belong to, to be a member of in good standing- it doesn't exist. Poof. Now you see it, now you don't. Now you're terrified your not really part of it; now you're free, you don't have to worry anymore. However removed you feel inside from "authentic manhood", it doesn't matter. What matters is the center inside of yourself- and how you live, and how you treat people, and what you can contribute as you pass through life on this earth, and how honestly you love, and how carefully you make choices. Those are the things that really matter. Not wether you're a real man. There's no such thing."

-John Stoltenberg

IT'S GOOD TO BE THE KING!

by Jeff Ott

When I went to high school I noticed something about how the boys/girls or men/women related to each other. There was a predetermined ideal. This ideal was the tough-guy/ quarterback/ overly-scholastic dude, couples with the dingy/ non-assertive/ "beautiful" (anorexic/ bulimic) girl. They win the homecoming king/ queen positions which proves they are superior to everyone else.

I was most pleased to have the handful of punks at Berkeley High to take me in. I thought we were so superior to the rest of the kids because we ignored football, homecoming, prom, etc.

Later on, a thing called the Gilman Street Project started happening. We punks had a place to socialize all of a sudden (besides the street that is). I didn't notice how quickly we started emulating their (the jocks) behavior. I guess I didn't notice (or want to notice) because I got special privileges out of the equation.

See, in our scene, instead of having quarterbacks, we have singers. Instead of "beautiful" (anorexic/ bulimic) women in expensive clothes, we have "beautiful" (anorexic/ bulimic) women in ripped clothes and funny colored hair. Since I played quarterback, er... I mean since I sing in a band, I received unspoken payoffs. I got valued higher that the other boys/men. On the other side, there were certain women who had the certain look, you know what I mean (anorexic/bulimic) who got valued higher than the other women/girls.

The only difference between us and the jocks (in these respects anyway) was that we didn't have an official contest to determine who wins the social status game. Otherwise, the structure, motivations and intentions are all the same- superiority and hierarchy.

Additionally, although it may be progress that I (the men) can expand their options beyond being a sports figure, the equation works out similar for women/girls. They are confined to the role of other. background. the OTHER part of the MAN. The only real choices allowed are styled of dress and hair, and choice of boyfriend (by which she has been defined).



Feminist Books:

Daughter of Earth
by Agnes Smedley

Backlash
by Susan Faludi.

Women, Race & Class
by Angela Y. Davis.

This Bridge Called My Back: Writings by Radical Women of Color
edited by Cherrie Moraga & Gloria Anzaldua

From Margin to Center

Ain't I A Woman
both by bell hooks

Angry Women: Interviews with 16 Angry Women
RE/SEARCH #13

Food for Our Grandmothers: Writings by Arab-American & Arab-Canadian Feminists
edited by Joanna Kadi

Words of Fire: An Anthology of African-American Feminist Thought
edited by Beverly Guy-Sheftall

To Be Real
by Rebecca Walker

Sister Outsider
by Audre Lorde

Women, Native, Other
by Trinh T. Minh-Ha

Third World Women & the Politics of Feminism
edited Chandra Monhanty



Healing Books:

The Courage to Heal
by Laura Davis

Managing Traumatic Stress Through Art
by Barry Cohen, Mary-Michola Barnes, and Anita B. Rankin

Being Peace & Touching Peace
by Thich Nhat Hanh

Victims No Longer:Men Recovering from Incest and Child Sexual Abuse.
by Mike Lew. Harper and Row.

I Don't Want To Talk About It: The Legacy of Male Depression
by Terrence Reel.

Men's Books:

Boyhood: Growing Up Male.

New Men New Minds.

Men and Intimacy: Personal Accounts Exploring the Dilemmas of Modern Male Sexuality.
all 3 edited by Franklin Abbot. Crossing Press.

Unbecoming Men.
by Anon. Times Change Press.

How Men Feel: Their response to women's demands for equality and power.
by Anthony Astrachan. Anchor/Doubleday Press.

Pro-Feminism: Men's Nonviolent Approach to Feminism.
published by the War Resister's League.

Men's Work: How to Deal with the Violence that Tears Our Lives Apart.
by Paul Kivel.



Refusing to Be A Man

The End of Manhood
both by John Stoltenberg. on Breitenbush books.

Stopping Rape: A Challenge for Men
by Rus Ervin Funk. New Society Publishers.

Against the Tide: Pro-Feminist Men in the US 1776-1990
edited by Michael Kimmel and Thomas Mosmiller. Beacon Press.

Transforming a Rape Culture.
by Emilie Buchwald, Pamela Fletcher, and Martha Roth. Milkweed Press.

Men's Bodies Men's Selves.
by Sam Julty. Delta.

Politics of Manhood: Pro-feminist men respond to the Mythopoetic Men's Movement.
by Michael Kimmel.



Sport, Men and the Gender Order: Critical Feminist Perspectives.
by M Messner and D. Sabo. Human Kinetics Press.

Wrestling with Love: How Men Struggle with Intimacy
by Samuel Osterson.

Women Respond to the Men's Movement.
by Kay Leigh Hagan. Harper-San Francisco.

For Men Against Sexism
by Jon Snodgrass. Times Change Press.

Boys Will Be Boys: Breaking the Link Between Masculinity and Violence.
by Myriam Miedzian. Doubleday.

Men On Rape
by Timothy Beneke

Talking About Our Lives:
A conversation on Socialization and Manhood

The three of us had this conversation one-day to try and document our thoughts about socialization and manhood. Because of the conversation format some of what we say is a little scattered, so bear with us. B= Basil Elias, MC= Matthew Campbell, and MM= Matthew Mullinnix.

B: Let's start by talking about different gendered stereotypes that we learned while growing up.

MC: The first image I think of is a picture of Paul Bunyon- this big huge lumberjack guy- and Babe, his blue ox. I picture them in the woods being isolated. alone and self-sufficient. He doesn't need anything and just takes care of himself.

MM: He's like the ox and the ox is part of him.



B: That's interesting. In the same sense, I was watching Bambi recently and the male deer is totally like that. He's secluded & doesn't seem to need anyone. Everyone in the forest seems to live on this one level and the male deer is pictured on a ledge looking over everyone else. He's pictured as the strong silent male. It's so different from Bambi's mother, who's nurturing, helpful and encouraging. When Bambi's mom dies, the male deer takes him in. In the end of the movie both Bambi and the other male deer are standing on this ledge together, looking over everyone. They look really strong and silent standing on the ledge together. The movie also shows this weird passage into male-hood. It was disturbing for me to watch.

MC: What does Bambi do with the pain of his mother dying?

B: Hardly anything. Bambi and his mom were in a field when these hunters came, so they started running to their home. Bambi made it and was all excited being like "mom, we made it" but then realized that his mom didn't make it. Then they showed this big rainstorm, which I guess was supposed to represent the crying, and the next scene was this sunny day, with happy music, like there was nothing wrong. Sometime in the rain-storm scene the male deer finds Bambi and takes him away. But the rain scene was so short; I didn't have time to process my own emotions about his mom dying. There was no mention about Bambi's mother after that either.

MC: There are definitely things that I've learned as proper roles or behaviors for what makes a man. I remember talking before on a panel about how I idolized Mr. Spock on star trek because he was so rational, intelligent and smart. He was a paradox too because he's not tough. Well, he is in

paradox too because he's not tough. Well, he is in his own way, but he's not tough in a physical sense. Those are some of the ideal characteristics of a man. At times some of these behaviors really haven't helped me at all and have been really hurtful to me. Just like with everybody I've had my struggles in life, and I understand some ways I need to deal with these struggles now, but the roles I was taught as a man really go against and hinder my ability to heal and become a fuller person. For example, as I was growing up, I don't remember ever talking about my insecurities or fears and I never talked about any kind of pain or feeling hurt, but I remember feeling a lot of that. Instead, I kept that all inside. I ended up drinking; doing drugs and anything else that could keep these feelings inside. That's one of the biggest things of being taught what a man is.



B: My dad's favorite TV characters were John Wayne and Rambo. His favorite things to watch on TV are war and violence. He likes disconnected violence where you never the repercussions. This violence and these TV characters were the role models of a man I looked up to. This effected me in so many ways. One of the ways it effected me was that I didn't feel like I fit in because I wasn't totally into that violence and also I wasn't anything like the men on TV or in many of the images around me.

Actually, When I was growing up I remember feeling like I didn't fit in all the time. Starting at a really young age, I felt alienated from a lot of people around me. I can remember feeling like this at ages six and seven. When I was six and seven I wasn't saying "I'm feeling alienated" I was thinking more along the lines of what's wrong with me. I was trying to impress all the people around me. When I was in second grade I remember my cousin and one of my close friends sitting there and telling me everything that was wrong with me. They would tell me all the things that I needed to do better to be their friend. I always felt like I didn't know enough or like I wasn't cool enough. Even when I got older, I felt like something was missing in my life. When I was in high school I felt like everybody in the school knew something that I didn't and that they all knew the same thing. This might not have been true but I felt alienated and thought everyone knew something that I was missing out on. I guess I can trace this feeling throughout a lot of my life.

MC: When you talk about alienation, I think about high school, and even earlier. I felt totally different than the other kids. For me, this feeling of not having something everyone else had came from all the images that I'd seen of different men, like my father, men in the media, men I would see as educators or leaders in the community, and guys that had just got things done. They were strong and tough. I remember when my grandfather died- my dad's dad- my mom was crying, and my dad was like "its time to move on." He didn't even shed a tear. I was given the idea that men are tough and not emotional. I had no idea that these were roles that were assigned to us. I just figured that men were inherently competent and didn't let things get to them. That this was part of their nature. As a little kid I knew that I wasn't like that. I remember getting in trouble on the playground because I was out of line, and I started crying. The other kids on the playground didn't do that when they got in trouble, they just took it and got angry. So I felt really different because the whole time I was growing up. I knew that I was really sensitive.

selected Resources

More sources
for further understanding
of topics covered in this zine.

If yes, how do you feel your answers to the questions

Have you ever acted in a way that is out of character for you in order to fit in with a person of another culture? If yes, why? How did it make you feel? If you know this person still, please ask them how it made them feel.

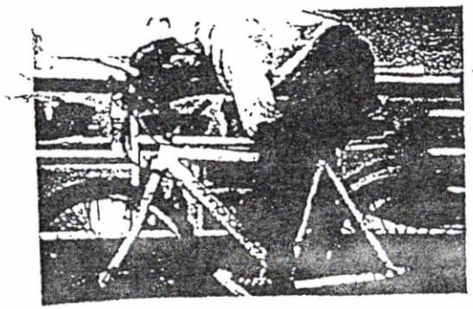
Are you comfortable with talking about your masculinity with men of other cultures? why or why not?

Questions on Racism

What is racism? Who can be racist? Are you racist? Why, or why not?

Questions on Class

What is your class background? How does this effect how you were taught to "be a man"?



Questions on Manhood

Define manhood? How did you come up with this definition? Are you happy with this definition? If yes, why? If no, what would you like to change about the definition of manhood?

What do you dislike most about men?

What makes you proud to be a man?

Is there anything you would like to change about yourself? If yes, what?

Is there anything you would like to change about how society portrays men? If yes, what?

Questions on questions

What did we leave out here that is vital in your life?

Credits: Some of these questions were brainstormed between me, Matthew Campbell, Sam Pullen, and Matthew Mullinnex. Most of the socialization questions came from a book edited by Franklin Abbott, called **BOYHOOD: Growing Up Male.** A bunch of the sex questions came from a flyer written by Katie Dugat. Other random questions were written by Sarah Kennedy, Michelle Luellen, Shayna Swanson, and Heather Lynn in a flyer titled "Some things a few women always wanted to know about men..." which I distributed at a few men's workshops in Chicago during the summer of 1995. Compilation of these questions was by me, basil elias.

I never felt like I lived up to that idea as a man. I felt totally less than, like a "wimp," or a "pussy."

MM: I can see my alienation in a whole bunch of different places. I wonder if it's just the three of us who were nerds in school, or if everyone is like that. There was definitely a crowd of kids who were the "cool kids" at school that I was not allowed to hang out with. The one time I had a chance to hang out with them they told me I had to pound on my friend. So I willingly went over there and punched him in the middle of class. I hung out with them for three days before Chris Parsons was like "who is this fuckin pussy that's always hanging out with us. I'm really getting tired of his ass." Well, nobody stood up for me, even though I could tell some of them liked me. But he was one of the ring leaders- one of the coolest cool kids. So, that was that. They would always chase me around, and call me "pussy," and I was constantly trying to be as cool as them. A lot of their cool had to do with how unemotive they were. What is being cool? Just the word alone... cool, not hot-tempered. Calm, cool and collected.

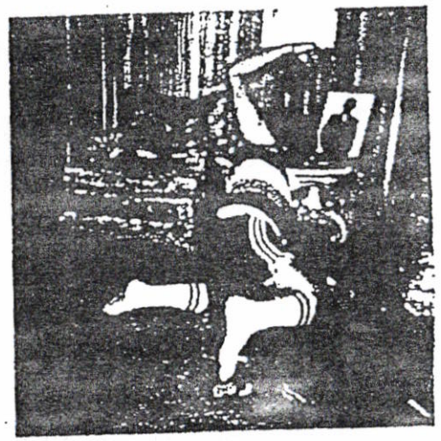
MC: You are in control.

MM: Yeah, for real. That's those boys.

MC: A few years ago I thought that if I could be stronger physically, be more athletic or learn how to fix cars, then I would be okay and feel like I fit in. This didn't work because I was hurting people by the way I was acting.

MM: I remember when I worked at a brokerage place with my dad and about 150 stockbrokers. They were all totally macho and always screaming over the phones, trying to scam people in to buying shit from them. Every time they shook your hand it was a contest of who could crush whose hand. Often I would hear women say, "if he doesn't have a firm handshake then he's fishy." So, I was always trying to shake hands really hard until I was in Virginia with this guy from Jamaica. I was painting his house and he came out and introduced himself. When we shook hands I tried to crush his hand and he was like "so, why do you do that?", I was like "what do you mean?" because I thought he was talking about shaking hands and I was really confused. He was like "why do you try to crush my hand?" and then started talking about how people in different cultures shake hands differently. He told me that they don't crush each other's hands where he's from and how it's just for touching hands. It totally threw me for a loop. So every time I shake somebody's hand now, I try to be as limp as possible.

B: For me, one way my dad tried to make me "act like a man" was with handshakes. When we would shake hands he would squeeze really hard, and I was expected to squeeze hard to. This was a test of manhood, and I wouldn't play sometimes because I didn't feel like I could live up to the expectations.



I knew I wasn't strong enough to beat my dad, and I didn't want to try. This carried out in other ways too. Sometimes when I would get into fights, I would just give up because I knew I wouldn't win. I didn't feel like I had what it took to pass those tests. At the same time I started to give up more in fights and other "men's games," I became really introverted and thought that I was just fucked up. This was also the time I started drinking and doing

anymore or skills I want to nurture in myself. I know that I have really bad skills to deal with my emotions and feelings and I'm trying to replace those bad skills with better skills that are more suitable to live a healthier, non-abusive life. This is difficult but it's what I need to do. Now I'm to the point where I can acknowledge my feelings. I can say "I'm feeling anxious, overwhelmed, scattered, frazzled, sad," etc., but I don't know what to do next.

MM: See, I can't even do that first part. When I get a rush of emotions, that's all that it is. The thing that comes out is "I don't know what I'm feeling". I have a really hard time figuring out what emotion I'm feeling.

MC: That's definitely a positive step from acting instantly with aggression or violence. It's a big step to be able to acknowledge your emotions. I always hear that anger is usually the second emotion and that there is always a root that goes before anger. A lot of time that root is hurt, fear, insecurity or other feelings. This is where I'm at. I'm trying to identify those feelings. To acknowledge "I'm feeling hurt now so I'm just going to sit and feel this hurt and talk out this hurt." That' s really hard to do because it's not pleasant. With anger I feel more powerful and like I have more control over what's going on, but that power and control is just an illusion.

MM: I remember wanting to control my environment and everybody around me. Part of this had to do with sexual abuse that I went through from my dad. I always felt like I was under his control and had to be in control of my emotions on some level or another. You can see how I would have to do whatever I had to do to make sure that what I was feeling was manageable.

Another control issue was the way that I always used to communicate with my mom. My dad moved out after a while and it was my two sisters my mom and me. There were three girls and a boy in the house and I really wanted to feel like I was in control, so I would use logic all the time. My mom would say that I couldn't go out and I would ask "why not?" And break it down logically. The root of her feeling like she didn't want me to go out was never good enough for me because it always came down to her feeling scared or like I wasn't spending enough time with them. I wanted a concrete reason like if I mow the lawn, or do something else then I can leave, and not just make her feel better. That just didn't make any sense to me. I could always argue my way into or out of anything. Do you know what I mean? Have you ever had that feeling of "stay calm, stay rational?"

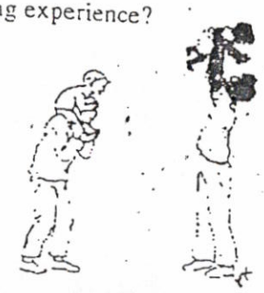


MC: I was extremely self-centered and egotistical in the way of thinking I was right and everyone else was stupid. This was especially more so with the women in my life- my mom and sister.

B: You expressed stuff more so toward them?

MC: Yeah definitely. Part of the reason is that my father wasn't really around and my brother was off in college. So there wasn't as much opportunity with them. But I still felt the hierarchy that my dad was on top of and the attitude that these were women and I'm a man. My mom had been exposed to this attitude all her life. The men in her life looked down on her, called her stupid and that kind of thing- even my father. I was playing out that cycle. When I was a seven and my mother was 35. I was acting like I was better than her, making her know that and making her feel like shit. Most of the arguments I had were with my mom. I felt

- When has defining or questioning your manhood been a liberating experience?



Questions on Sex

- Define Sex?
- How many kinds of sex are there?
- What are other possible definitions of sex?
- Define Rape?
- Define Sexual Assault/ Abuse?
- Is there a difference? If yes, what?
- Do you think your definitions of sex and sexual assault/abuse are learned? If yes, where did you learn them from? If no, how did you come up with these definitions?
- Are there ways to violate your partner that aren't included in your definitions of rape and assault/abuse? Name some of these ways.
- How do you feel about sex? Are you comfortable talking about it with others? What is it like for you when you see sex on the TV or in movies?
- Who initiates most of the sex you have- you or your partner? Why?
- What are some of the things you really like, when having sex? Ie. Oral sex, etc.
- Name at least 3 ways to pay attention to your partners body language during sex.
- Can you think of a time when you had sex but weren't sure if you or your partner wanted to or meant to?
- How do you know when you want to have sex?
- Were you ever forced/coerced to have sex or seduced by someone? How did you feel about it? Was there anyone you could talk to with who would help you?
- Do you know someone who has been sexually abused? How did you react when you found out? Do you know any skills in how to be an ally to abuse survivors?
- Name 3 things you can do if someone you know was raped?
- Have any of your closest friends been accused of rape? How did you feel? Did it change your relationship? If yes, in what ways?
- What are 3 things you can do if a friend of yours is accused of rape?
- How much do you and your partner communicate during sex? How does it feel?
- Do you practice safer sex? Why or Why not?
- Name one person, if any, who you've been in an intimate relationship with who was physically stronger than you? Was the difference noticeable? How did you feel?
- If you haven't, how does the idea of being in a relationship with someone physically stronger than you feel?

Questions on Sexuality

- Are you Queer?
- If not, how do you feel about people who are Queer?

...for your ideas about these stereotypes?

surface. Every question holds a story that needs to be told carefully. Add questions or amend these to represent your issues more accurately.

Questions on Socialization

- At what point where you aware that you were not a girl but a boy?
- Who taught you more about your gender role? Mother, father, peers or others?
- Before puberty, what was your awareness of the male body- both yours and others? What was your awareness of the female body?
- Do you remember any recurring dreams or fantasies from this time?
- How did you feel about being out of doors? At school? At home with family? By yourself?
- Who were your best male friends? Who did you look up to among your elders? Whom did you avoid or fear?
- Whom did you have fights with? How often? Who disciplined you? How? How often?
- Who would you go to if you were in trouble? Where did you go to be safe? Who cared for you when you were sick?
- What did you accomplish in elementary school? Did you excel in games, music, and school subjects? Were you well liked? What kinds of problems did you have?
- What were you told about your race/ethnicity/religion? What were you told about other races, ethnic groups or religions?
- Who taught you about religion? Did you believe it? What were the hardest parts to believe?
- Did you go through a time when you didn't like girls? Did you have friends who were girls? Girlfriends? Were you ever called a girl or a sissy? By whom? How often?
- What toys did you play with? What games did you play?
- What were your clothes like? What kinds of haircuts did you have?
- What TV shows, movies or stories did you like?
- What did you want to be when you grew up?
- Did you have heroes or idols?
- Did you have sex play? With whom? How often? Were you ever caught? Punished? By Whom? How?
- Were you ever forced to have sex or seduced by someone? How did you feel about it? Was there anyone you could talk with who would help you?
- Did you hunt, fish or garden? Who taught you how?
- Did you have pets, hobbies, special treasures?
- Did you have favorite teachers or relatives? Teachers or relatives you disliked or feared?
- What was one of the best things that happened to you as a boy? What was one of the worst?
- What happened to you as a boy when you reached puberty?
- Was there anyone who you could talk to about any problem you had? Who? Why were you able to talk to them?
- What do you miss about being a boy?
- Assuming you have or could have a son or foster son, how would you want his boyhood to

like she was stupid, and I would be really rational and logical to deal with our conflicts.

I almost never argued with my dad though, because there was such a distance. I remember arguing once or twice when I was in high school. It was fucked up. I remember one time he thought I was lying about something, and I wasn't. This was probably the first time I told the truth to my parents in a couple years. He freaked out, threw me up against the cabinets and started choking me. My voice was crackling. I felt powerless. I was trying to defend myself and wasn't able to.



B: By doing that, your dad was pushing this cycle of violence on you.

With me, my parents were really controlling, especially with my schoolwork, and stuff about my race. It all ties in together though. See, They both came to this country from the Middle East, and were raised really different than me. On one hand they wanted me to have a lot of the things they had, especially from our social and cultural traditions. On the other hand they wanted me to assimilate into American culture. Not only that, they wanted me to assimilate into middle class American culture. So, they pushed me with school to become so many things that I never wanted to be, like a Businessman or a Doctor. They tried to control what I studied, and when I resisted, how much I studied. Then they would try to control a lot of my outlook on the world. They would tell me that I'm American, and not an Arab. They would tell me to close that part of myself off from the rest of the world around me. They knew the political repercussions of being an Arab in this country- all the racism and bigotry, etc.- and they didn't want me to have to struggle. So, they would try to make me be only an American. This forced assimilation was part of cycle of violence they put on me.

Finally, I have begun to recognize this cycle and how it manifests itself in me. As well as been hurt, I know that I've hurt a lot of people too. This is the one of the hardest thing for me to recognize and acknowledge. For example, I sexually assaulted my first girlfriend, and that was me, continuing the cycle of violence. She was in a hard knox situation in her life already. She had been sexually abused by her parents, was from a poor & dysfunctional family, and was looked down on by lots of people around us. We started going out and were both looking to each other to be some sort of escape from our own situations in one way or another, until I sexually assaulted her. I feel so angry with myself every time I think about this.

MM: Me too. That's what I'm constantly racking my brain about. I wake up every morning thinking about the people that I hurt. I don't know how to deal with it. I molested my sister. Part of my abuse was that I had to abuse my sister. A couple weeks ago I made a list of all the people that I could have possibly sexually assaulted or abused- all the way up to my first girlfriend, and all the boys I've slept with. I wonder how they see that now. This includes all the times that I've had sex before I even knew what sex was. Are they macho boys now, thinking about me as this little pervert. That's what my sister thinks. She thinks I'm a perverted, sick, fucker. I've gotten so much mail from her that's like "you're fucked, the whole family's fucked." I have no idea how to deal with that. I don't know if I can forgive myself for that.

MC: There's a long list of people I've hurt too- in many different ways. I have a hard time talking

abusive, but I've been abusive in other ways. This cycle of violence has been taught to me. The pain comes around and I'm not taught how to deal with it. I know what it's like to be really hurt and really abused and I've passed that on. I don't like that.

So, I'm doing this work. I'm doing work against sexism and violence. But at the same time I'm scared to talk about the ways that I've abused people. This is really tricky because in order for me to be really open and honest I have to reveal some really horrible things I've done, and I feel like people are going to discount the work and the wonderful things I do. I'm afraid that people will call me a hypocrite.



MM: Basil, you were talking about being emotive in a controlling way- What did you mean by that?

B: When I started being confronted by feminism I went into a process of becoming self critical of how aggression, violence and sexism fit into my life. I tried to be more sensitive to the people around me but in a way where I felt like I had control over what was going on. I still find this pattern in my life. I have a hard time expressing my feelings in an open way. I have a really hard time letting go in general. This relates to a lot of fear I have of what I'll be like if I let go, who I'll be like, and how people will perceive me. So, when I examine my feelings, sometimes I find that I do it in a precise way, logical and rigid way. One thing I've been working on lately is to try and let go, open up, and feel what it feels like to not be so logical or controlling about my emotions.

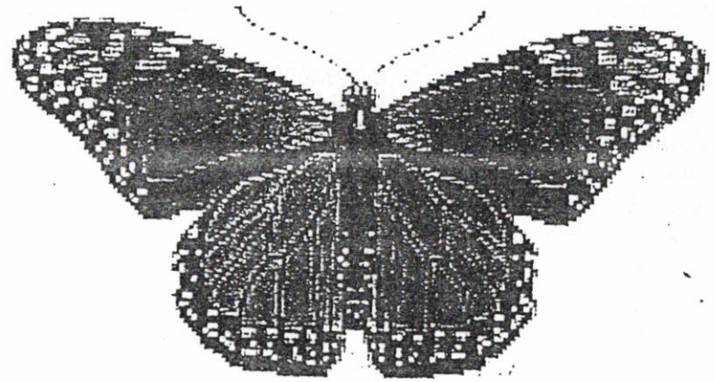
MM: I think I hit that problem of letting go when I do art. Art is so intimidating to me because it's not logical. How you hold a brush, which way you move it, and how much paint you put on can't be calculated. Doing art feels like pure emotion sometimes because it's out of my control.

MC: Lately, I feel like I've adapted all these new ideas about what's okay for men to do. I have a lot of understanding now about these things, like it being unhealthy for me to hold in my emotions. Now I know that it's a good thing for me and other men to experience, express and let them out our emotions. But just because I know that doesn't mean I do it. I still get freaked out. If there are guys around I'm not gonna cry. I'm constantly looking around to see who is there. There are certain people who I talk to about personal things, but it takes me a long time to trust a group of guys. For example, I've been talking with you guys for a little while now about personal things, but how personal do I get? How intensely do you know me? Do I speak from my heart or am I speaking from experiences that I had or feelings that I had? Can I tell you about how insecure, how fucked up, insignificant, or un-manly I feel right now?

B: I have a great story. Today when I saw you at school you asked me how I was doing, and I said frazzled because I was having a hard time earlier. I was still having a hard time when I saw you but I said how I was doing in a way that was analytical and disconnected from how I was actually doing. I didn't allow myself to really express my feelings to you. I presented myself like I was in total control. I have an easier time expressing myself with the women in my life, but no matter how vulnerable or against sexism you guys or other men in my life are, I have a hard time letting go and being open. There's always a disclaimer at the end of a feeling when I'm with guys. I especially have a hard time trusting men who don't openly acknowledge that there is sexism. It doesn't have to be in the same "men

Getting to Know yourself

some questions
to aid in the process
of self*discovery..





against sexism" language- using words like perpetrator and cycle of violence- but it has to be some acknowledgment that there is a problem and an attempt to deal with it.

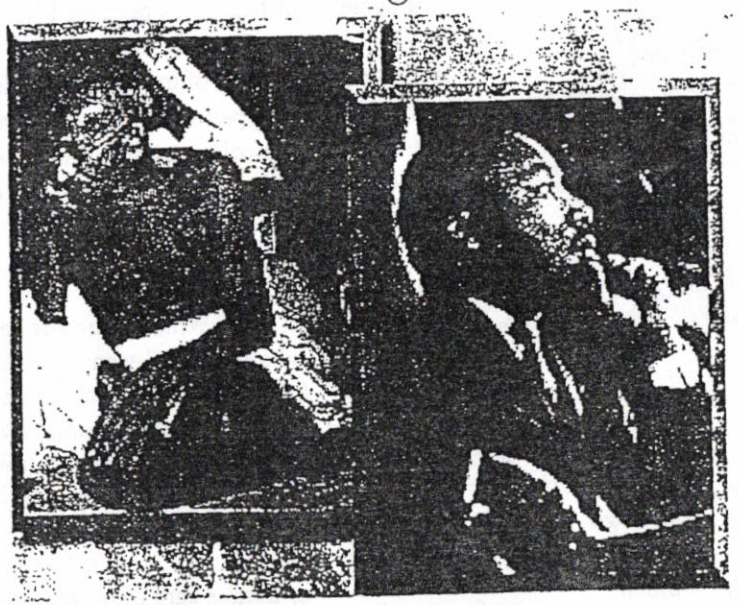
MM: I've never cried to another boy. Maybe with my dad once, but I was way out on the edge, feeling like I was about to go crazy when that happened. But I've totally cried, gotten shaky and out of control with women.

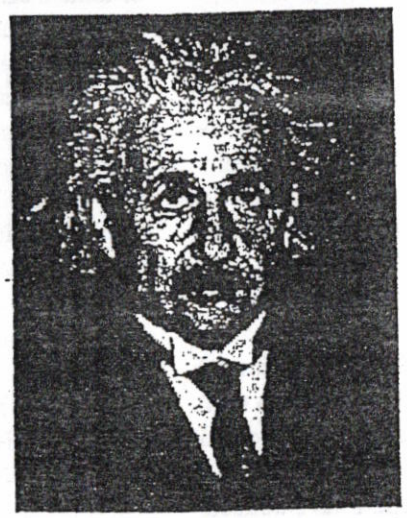
MC: This is a little different, but I felt a freedom when I first came upon feminism, because I felt a comradeship. I felt like men had abused me in my life. Not necessarily child abuse but even trying to live up to being a man. Being teased and picked on and the subtle things of me not feeling like a man. Feeling abused by the media images of roles of leaders and those things. When I came to feminism I realized that I'm not crazy and that things are fucked up. I started hating all men for a good while. Then came upon the realization that I'm still male. Now I hate myself too. Part of this may sound unhealthy and self-hating but there are parts of me that I shouldn't accept. I have abused others. I don't think I should like those parts. I shouldn't hate them but I should put them in a context of what I grew up with and what I did. I can't change my past but I'm still responsible to make sure I don't make these mistakes again and that I give my best effort to help prevent others from being abused and from abusing other people. The major work I see is with men. It's a really difficult task because I was real resistant to admit that I was wrong. I'm still resistant to saying that I am part of the problem. Masculinity, for me, was wrapped up in ego. I was taught to be right and in control. I know that in order to make a better world I have to forego the whole thing. I had to change absolutely everything I was taught. That's difficult.

B: Which brings us back to this zine. The whole reason I wanted to put together this zine is to talk about processes of men ending sexism and my process. How I was raised as a man. How I was raised as aggressive and how I didn't have the skills to deal with my emotions. I not only didn't have the skills to not deal with my emotions; I didn't have the skills to acknowledge my emotions, or to take care of myself, to take care of other people. I wanted to talk about those things and how feminism totally confronted the shit out of me. How I embraced that confrontation because while I was being confronted, it was the only place where I could see people publicly saying "things are fucked up," and saying it because they cared about themselves and me. I realized that my pain is real and I'm not alone, and that I could do something about it. Now I do all this men's work. I do all this activism against sexism and domestic violence. I'm trying to put together this zine and try to talk to people. And it's coming out of this intense feeling of responsibility.



Without previous knowledge,
at first glance it would be difficult to see
what is so unique and special about
each of these gentleman.





However, it doesn't take a
genius to see that. . .

Personal Goals
(from a workshop for men ending sexism)

I will be proud to be a man.

I will not let the far right define what's right.

I'm gonna relate to people instead of be reactive.

I will be more critical of myself and my actions.

I will help people go into high schools and talk about sexism.

I will seek intimacy with men.

I will get clear about what sexism is.

I will not let fear of attack deter me in my goal to eliminate sexism.

I will support women in their struggle to choose.

I will be an ally to both men and women to end sexism.

I will work to demolish my insecurities around men and women.

I will give up my neediness of women and listen to them more.

I will endeavor to confront male sexism.

Men Have the Choice to:

- Men have the choice to Treat both women and men with respect due an equal.

- Men have the choice to Stop Telling sexist jokes.

- Men have the choice to Hear and accept "NO" from thier partner.

- Men have the choice to Mentor and educate other males on these issues.



- Men have the choice to Stop violence within their families and to encourage men's participation in understanding it's roots.

- Men have the choice to Play an Active Role in stopping sexual violence, harassment, and abuse.

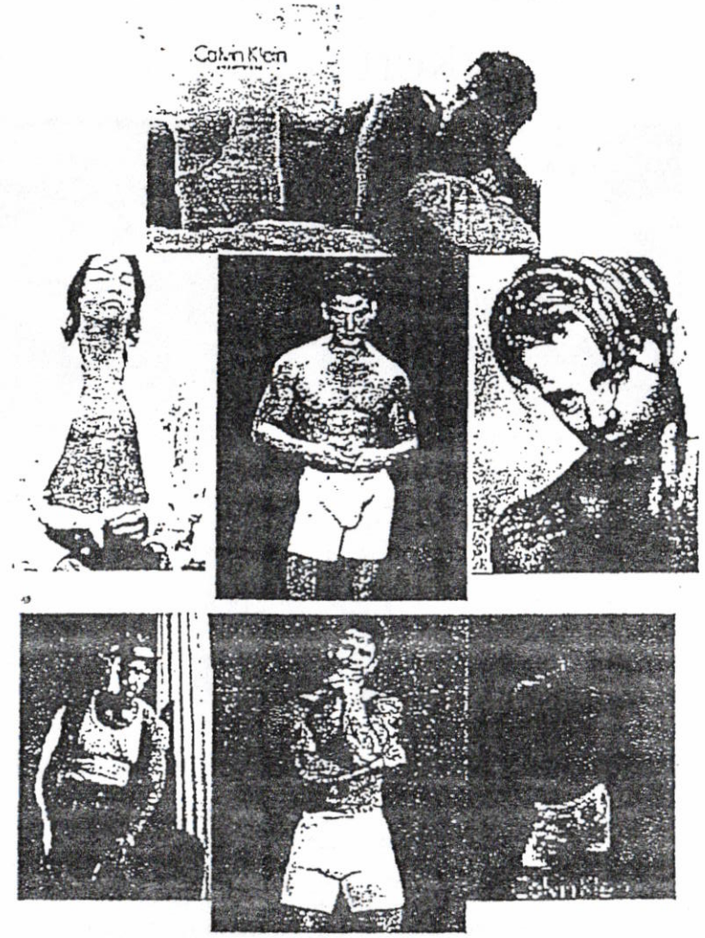
- Men have the choice to Develop healthy relationships with both men and women and to carry this over to how we deal with the world as a whole.

- Men have the choice to Not make assumptions about women regardless of their dress, or actions.

- Men have the choice to Accept a balance of both their feminine and masculine qualities.

Men have these choices and others to make our world a safe and healthy environment in which to live.

These Men



Are Sexy.

Fat is just a big joke. These guys aren't to be taken seriously.



Roscoe "Fatty" Arbuckle



Chis Farley



Jackie Gleason

"Fat Man" - a song of Jethro Tull's 1969 album Stand Up

Don't want to be a fat man,
people would think that I was
just good fun.
Would rather be a thin man,
I am so glad to go on being one.
Too much to carry around with you,
no chance of finding a woman who
will love you in the morning and all the night time too.

Don't want to be a fat man,
have not the patience to ignore all that.
Hate to admit to myself half of my problems
came from being fat.
Won't waste my time feeling sorry for him,
I seen the other side to being thin.
Roll us both down a mountain
and I'm sure the fat man would win.

Standing Up to Say "No More": Steps Toward A Rape-Free Culture

We live in a rape culture. Where, in the US, a woman is raped every 2-3 minutes, 1 in 3 females is sexually abused before age 18, 1 in 2.5 women are victims of sexual assault in their lifetimes, and 1 in 6 boys are victims of incest or other sexual assault before their eighteenth birthday. These statistics represent real people, and it's most likely that people we all know have been effected by this tragedy. Rape, including all forms of sexual harrassment, abuse and assault is serious and we must all take steps in our life to promote a rape-free culture. The following is a list of some steps we can take.

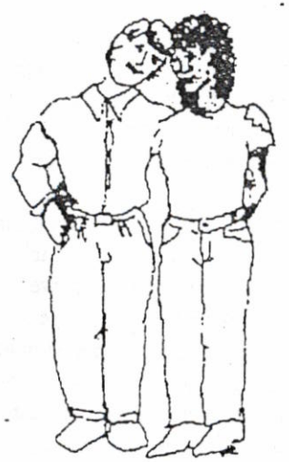
- TALK ABOUT SEX
- DISCUSS YOUR EXPECTATIONS
- TAKE "NO" FOR AN ANSWER
- RECOGNIZE AND SHARE YOUR FEELINGS
- RESPECT OTHER'S FEELINGS
- ASK OTHERS WHAT MAKES THEM FEEL UNSAFE
- GIVE WOMEN SPACE
- ENCOURAGE WOMEN'S EFFORTS TO EMPOWER THEMSELVES
- DEVELOP FULL RELATIONSHIPS WITH BOTH MEN AND WOMEN
- CONFRONT WOMAN-HATING ATTITUDES IN OURSELVES AND OTHERS
- RECOGNIZE AND INTERRUPT SEXUAL ASSAULT
- STOP PRETENDING SUBMISSION IS CONSENT
- SUPPORT ANTI-RAPE ORGANIZATIONS
- STOP WITHDRAWING EMOTIONALLY
- STOP TELLING SEXIST JOKES
- BE CRITICAL OF PORNOGRAPHY
- STOP BEING VIOLENT



different cultural, ethnic and class origins and support each other's struggles. For example, I am an Arab, queer, upper-middle class man, and I need to be able to be all of who I am when I am doing work against sexism.

A pro-feminist men's movement is important in challenging men's roles in society because men can learn to be supportive of each other and benefit from this support and closeness and to be supportive of women, while women have the space to express themselves fully and to be heard and respected. This offsets the unequal dynamic of men having more freedom and power and being able to grant women freedom and power, to men doing the work on ourselves for ourselves and women, therefore taking up less space, where women can take that space and make it their own. Then, where so many men have pushed women back and not listened to them because men have thought they were so much more important, women can stand up and say what they have to say, and we, as men, will listen.

A pro-feminist men's movement is important because men need to fulfill our emotional, physical and spiritual needs, and women need to fulfill their emotional, physical and spiritual needs, and men need to do this in a way that is not abusive and obtrusive to women. This is important because women are dying from men's abuse every day, and we need to heal ourselves and stop the abuse, and support women in their healing. Men need to respect, listen and learn from women, humbly, and in turn taking the patriarchy apart, piece by piece



Coalition Building

In compiling the writing for this zine, I've noticed that there isn't much mention of race and how issues of racism tie into sexism. Being an Arab-american, middle class man, I deal with racism constantly in my life and cannot separate this from my anti-sexist or anti-classist work. I understand that I can't be a man against sexism if I'm not against racism too, because with working in the struggle against one form of oppression I must also work to end all oppression. Just like I can't be anti-racist without working with struggles against sexism, classism or homophobia. With breaking the silences around one form of oppression, I need to work toward ending all oppressive silences. Otherwise, I disrespect myself and the work I do by being disrespectful to oppressed peoples everywhere.

The concepts of building coalitions are really important to me. I believe that in struggles to end oppression, groups working with different issues need to work together and we need to be respectful, supportive and critical of each others work. Personally, I need to be accountable for my actions that hurt others and play out oppressive cycles, as well as I need to work with other people who are also accountable of their actions. Because these struggles are bigger than all of us, and we need to work together. People and groups working together is imperative in ending oppression.

With that said, I look at this zine. I wonder how the ideas in here will sit with people of many communities. I know that the issues of my socialization as an Arab-american man are different than a friend who's european-american. I know that issues of manhood in many different black communities will be different than mine. I know, however, that sexism, in it's many different forms falls into all these communities, and we need to find our own ways to address these issues and to challenge and transform ourselves and our communities.

Mens Issues of Body Image

Matthew Campbell

Eating disorders are somewhat of a luxury. It seems easy to view over-eating as a luxury resulting from abundance, but not so easy to identify the self-deprecating disorders of anorexia and bulimia as luxuries. I don't mean to undermine the torture eating disordered people suffer by arguing the luxury of it. I'm questioning where eating disorders fit into Maslow's hierarchy of needs. The obvious question is why do people choose to starve themselves? Maslow talked about humans being motivated by a striving to fulfill particular needs. So the next question becomes what need are people attempting to fulfill through eating disorders?

This is a broad subject and I'll begin to narrow it down by exploring the not so commonly explored area of males with eating disorders. A woman's problem you say? One out of ten people diagnosed with eating disorders is male. I suggest that the myth of eating disorders as women's issues has prevented many men from admitting they have a problem, seeking treatment, and thus from being counted in the statistics. Men do have anorexia, bulimia, and overeating problems and I plan to address the whys and hows.

It is often a frustrating process attempting to understand psychological disorders through researching studies and tests which appear in the official and scholarly journals. Many of the articles I've found during this research were formulating ideas as to who is most at risk for eating disorders by examining different and obscure factors of biological make up. That's great and all and can be helpful at times, but I find it more helpful to actually ask men who have eating disorders how they feel about their condition and what they think causes it. So I've talked with men about their body image and draw on my own experiences for this paper.

To the task of narrowing again. Eating disorders come in all shapes and sizes. The focus here is eating disorders which are spawned or affected by body image perception as well as other ways which men deal with body image. Overeating, by itself, doesn't appear to be connected to body image issues, but there may be some connections which will be explored. Other disorders like difficulty or inability to swallow will not be addressed here.

I've often heard that "rugged individualism" is an American value. Try being a true individual and see what Americans really think. Self-contained sufficiency is a more accurate value in America, not individualism. In this sexist society, these values are applied to men. An independent individualistic woman is somewhat frowned upon still today. Manliness is measured by a man's ability to conform to the ideals of masculinity. Some of these ideals are strength, competence, control, and self-sufficiency. Independent thinking and behavior is "appropriate" for men as long as it upholds the rigid ideals of masculinity; heterosexuality, hard work, and dominance over anything that is not male or that which threatens maleness.

There is a definite physical component to masculinity. Small, skinny guys are "pip-squeaks." Muscular men embody hard work, ability dominate, and sexual virility (also the ability to attract women).. Fat men represent laziness and possibly a lack of self-constraint. These are a few meanings American culture attaches to body image. In some Latin American cultures larger bellies equate masculinity because they are culturally associated with wealth and affluence. Just as some men attempt to live up to culturally dictated masculine behaviors, some men attempt to live up to culturally dictated masculine body image. The ideal masculine body image in America looks something like this:



It is not common for advertising and other forms of popular media to display out of shape, overweight men.

Just look around.

Overeating is an eating disorder. It is different from the image related disorders so I'm addressing first and separately from the rest of the paper. Overeating is similar to drug addiction in that the overeater cannot seem to control the behavior even in the face of negative consequences. Bingeing on food is a way that people can either distract themselves from or suppress their feelings. There is even a physiologically addictive quality to sugars and fatty foods for some people. The overeating itself doesn't seem to be driven by a striving for a masculine body type but often leads to a negative self image. Guilt and shame about the bingeing and consequent body image lead some men to purge. This is bulimia.

I don't feel that I can really explain exactly the what why and how of eating disorders. I know that I have never been bulimic because the many times that I tried to make myself purge I was unable to vomit. I feel lucky that the times I stuck my fingers down my throat and gagged and gagged that I couldn't vomit because bulimia can do real physical damage. One of the smartest friends I have, Deborah Coulston, did her masters thesis on eating disorders and she told me that vomiting actually creates chemical changes in the body which can be addictive. With my history of addiction it would have been bad for me to have succeeded with purging.

Since I became aware of my body in high school, I have been very uncomfortable taking off my shirt in public. Self-esteem is something that I have always lacked. A lot of it has to do with feeling that I wasn't masculine. Sports were never my thing, except for tennis which isn't football, baseball, or basketball. I've always been very sensitive and full of fear and insecurity. Sensitive and scared are not traits of masculinity. Chorus was one of my favorite activities in school and I was good at singing. Another "unmasculine" thing about me was that I was considered "pussy-whipped" in relation to my girlfriends because I was unable to stand up for myself or was vulnerable to them. The only things I was proud were my intelligence and singing ability which translate to "nerd" in high school.

I first began to deal with my insecurities through heavy drug use. My body image wasn't a concern of mine (neither was anything else) because I was focused on drugs. I checked into rehab with my drug addiction and left with extreme insecurity and an extra thirty pounds. Food became my new way to deal with my problems and emotions. As I said, I literally gained thirty pounds in the thirty days I was in treatment. During my first year of addiction recovery I ate fast food at least once but commonly two to three times a day. My body was disgusting to me.

Weight lifting had intimidated me because it seemed so macho. Football player friend Sean eased me into it however. I started working out obsessively and trying to get stronger and more muscular. Luckily, through my recovery, I was building my self-esteem in other ways and realized that this working out was distorting my self-perception. I'm a really neat guy in a lot of ways and I continue to cultivate beautiful qualities in myself. The hard thing for me to handle is that no matter how much I like myself, I still feel excruciatingly uncomfortable taking my shirt off in public or wearing clingy clothing.

I have this problem with perfectionism and I fall very shy of perfect. But no matter how many good qualities I find in myself, I negate each one because of my body image. What a person looks like is the first quality that is assessed. It takes some time for someone to get to know me but they instantly know what I look like. I still don't have the greatest self-esteem so I figure that people are going to judge me negatively because I have a little bit of a belly.

A good while ago Roseanne Barr had come out as a survivor of sexual abuse.
When she did, she kind of explained her weight as a coping/defense mechanism. For her it was a way to become an unlikely target for further sexual assault. Most of the people I talk to who have been abused (sexually, emotionally, physically) describe a sense of powerlessness or lack of control resulting from the powerlessness they experienced during the abuse. A lot of us "survivors" attempt to gain some sense of control even if it is self-destructive. Some people hurt themselves with drugs, some physically hurt themselves, some hurt others, some attempt to control their bodies, and some of us do a little of each plus a number of things I haven't listed or even identified.

Not all of the men I have talked to who struggle with their body image have been sexually abused. This goes back to the idea that masculinity has

A (Pro) Feminist Men's Movement

by basil

Lately, in working on sexism within my life and my community, I've been dealing with two groups of men. These groups are 1.men who actively work against sexism, and 2, men who, while acknowledging that sexism is wrong, generally avoid confronting it. I belong to the first group.

I began organizing men's support and discussion groups almost 3 years ago, in an attempt to create a support system for me and the men around me. I wanted a space for us to deal with our sexism in a non-judgemental way, under the preface that we are all sexist men trying to work through it. I started writing articles about my life, my work on sexism and men's roles in particular. Through my writing, I wanted, both, a connection with other men dealing with similar issues, and a public space to be open about men's issues for all men to have access to.

Through my work on sexism, I began to find other men who were dealing with similar roles (i.e.. mythopoetic, father's rights, religious men's movements, etc.). I understand that there are so many men who are questioning their present roles in society and are working to change these roles. I also understand that I need a focus with the men's groups I participate with and, more specifically, with the personal work I do. I understand that this focus needs to come from, and to support, where I learned to question my role as a sexist man- this place being feminism.

When beginning to write this article, my friend Erika and I were brainstorming ideas when she asked me to define what I mean by a "pro-feminist men's movement." I tumbled over my words and came up with "a movement of men who are working toward ending sexism with a feminist basis." She then asked a more difficult question- "what is a feminist basis?" Talking about this question over and over again, I understood that feminism is defined differently by the many woman who consider themselves feminists. Finally, I came up with a rough definition of what I mean by a feminist basis.

A feminist basis for a men's movement is both a pro-woman and anti-patriarchy movement that looks at power dynamics between men and women, where men

1. realize their place in the patriarchy and challenge this position,
2. listen to what women have to say (i mean really listen), and
3. realize that the patriarchy was put in place by men and needs men and women to work together to take it out of place.

Men need to understand that getting together to talk about our emotions and feelings is very important and we need to challenge the roles we were placed under as men, but that we need to do this in a way that is encouraging for and not alienating to women. A feminist basis for a men's movement is unlike other men's movements that are so pro-men that they become anti-women again (therefore reinstating the patriarchy). It is like feminism, which gives women the chance to speak and define who they are while supporting women to do this.

A pro-feminist men's movement is a group of guys who want to work on ourselves (encourage our emotions and closeness with other men) and actively challenge the patriarchy (and ways in which society's rules oppress women and hurt men), and do this in a way that is encouraging and supportive of and because of all women (including women of different race, class, and ethnic backgrounds and sexual orientations), because we acknowledge that all forms of oppression are interlocked, we work against sexist oppression as part of working against all oppression, and for our own liberation. A true men's movement should address the needs and struggles of men from

Men's work

by basil

Matthew Fox, a creation spirituality theologian, in his book The Reinvention of Work, says "There are three types of work, inner work, outer work, and the work you do to bring the two together." These three types of work relate to many facets of life. Inner work is the work we do on our selves. This type of work can be to increase our self-awareness. Outer work is the work we do with our families, friends, communities, and the people outside of ourselves. The work we do to bring these two together is the link between our inner and outer work.

Another version of these terms inner and outer are our private and public sphere. I've seen many men do work in their public sphere, but leave their private sphere unkept and falling apart. It is important that we work within our private and public sphere when we do any kind of emotional, physical, or spiritual work. Otherwise we follow the patterns of many hurt men in this society- having good relationships at work and painful, lonely relationships with the people we share our homes with.

Doing men's work is no different. It is important for us to do the work on ourselves as well as go into the community. We can not work effectively at a domestic violence shelter if our inner self is suffering and is getting no attention. Many people who only do the public work without the private work end up projecting their own feelings on the people they are trying to work with.

Men's work is our inner work. This is the process of looking at our lives, healing from our hurts, and nurturing our beauty. This is the process of discarding old coping skills that are no longer relevant to our lives anymore and developing new healthy skills to replace them. This is about knowing ourselves fully and accepting our lives, taking responsibility for our actions and directing our lives where we want to be headed.

Men's work is our outer work. This is the work we do with our friends, family and communities. This is building healthy relationships and healing hurt relationships. This is working with or donating to community programs that work against violence. This is saying no to sexism around and within us, and trying to challenge sexism in the society we live in. This is learning to understand how sexism connects with all other social issues and working to bridge the gaps between our privilege and oppressions and to make these connections in the world around us.

The work of bringing these two worlds, inner and outer, together is about sharing our personal work with others and learning from the work we do in our communities and bringing it back to our own lives. This is the link between ourselves and the rest of the world.

Men's work is important work and it happens in each and every one of us.

a corresponding body type. The "feminine" ideal that is pushed is thinness whereas for men it is lean and muscular. Overweight men concerned with body image attempt to lose weight and build muscle. The use of steroids by some men displays feelings of insecurity regarding their body size.

Everything I have read reports that gay and bisexual men as having higher incidence of eating disorders and body image problems. Within the gay community body image for men is more emphasized than in the heterosexual community. It has been pretty much accepted that man (straight, bi, gay, other) have a high response to visual stimulation. In the heterosexual world, this is played out by extreme physical standards for women and bodily objectification. The same thing occurs in gay male community with the standards and objectification being placed on men. Many of the queer men I talk with experience a heightened body consciousness. When I think of being with a man, I become more uncomfortable with my body than I have when I have been physically intimate with women.



More men than those who comprise the ten percent of eating disorders struggle with their body image. First of all, men are much less likely to seek help for or admit their eating disorders because it seems very unmasculine to feel insecure with their bodies and have a "woman's" problem. Trying to fit into masculinity definitely kept me from talking about my body insecurity for a long time.

So men's eating disorders go unnoticed often and the other ways men cope with negative body image isn't normally seen as problematic. This is the case with athletes and compulsive exercisers. With athletes, their achievements can be a way to attain a sense of masculinity. In my experiences of going to gyms, I've seen many men who are insecure with their bodies. They don't talk about it, they just lift more weights. There are very lean and muscular men who buy steroids and supplements because as strong as they are they feel the need to be "bigger and better."

For different men there are different factors which influence their body image issues. Dancers, actors , and sex workers must fit certain standards if they are to be successful (just as it is for women.) Of course larger men have their place in the media but are limited in their roles. They are not usually playing roles of the action hero or the romantic. This influences the men who consume the media and sends them the messages that competent and sexually attractive men are thin and muscular.

Whenever people attempt to modify themselves (whether their behavior, thinking patterns, or physical appearance) it is an admission that they are not comfortable or happy with their current self. This is great when they are trying to change negative or destructive things about themselves. There are varying degrees from that of 'just wanting to lose a few pounds' to an absolute obsession with perfecting the body even if it means dangerous and unhealthy behavior.

To sum it up, men and women are socialized to adhere to certain standards of masculinity and femininity respectively. The more a man feels insecure about his relationship to masculinity, the harder he tries to fit the role. Manipulating the body to fit the lean and strong standards is one of the ways some men attempt to achieve a masculine identity. We are all born with different bodies. Some are closer to the "ideal" than others. There are men who are more comfortable with themselves and their masculinity and therefore comfortable with their bodies. Some men are very insecure and therefore make many and varied attempts to be more masculine. These attempts manifest in many different behaviors which are hurtful to themselves and the people around them. Since this paper is about men and body-image disorders I've addressed how attempting to live up to "ideal masculinity" can be hurtful to men in the way that it causes painful dysfunction to how we treat ourselves and our bodies

reflections on my gender

By Chris Dixon

As a man, I have rarely thought about how I came to understand "masculinity." In fact, dominant images of masculinity have only helped me to ignore how I have been conditioned to accept certain ideas about "manhood." A while ago, though, I read an article in a class that I was taking that made me think more critically about how my understanding of my gender identity has been shaped. The article was about school as a place where boys learn about what it is to be "male." It made me think about my experiences in school.

As I searched my history as a student, I realized that, for as long as I can remember, I have been uncomfortable with traditional ideas of "normal" masculinity. For example, I vividly recall that in the game that many of us know as "boys chase girls" at recess in elementary school, I frequently ran with the girls. I also remember that most of the competitive games at school scared me more than attracting my interest. I dreaded the physical education classes that we had twice a week from first to sixth grade. I simply never "measured up" to the physical prowess of most of the other boys. I see now that the P.E. ritual, in many ways, set and reinforced how we thought of masculinity.

Furthermore, I can grasp in retrospect how my seven-year-old understanding of masculinity came to be tied to heterosexism and homophobia. I remember walking with my best friend Clark at recess, both of us often with our arms around each other in mutual affection, until one day his older brother called us "faggots." Though I had no idea what exactly that label meant, I knew it was bad. There is truly no better example in my mind of the point that heterosexist silencing affects everyone. I was just a child, but my ways of showing affection to other boys (and, later, men) were severely limited for years before I was able to critically examine my early conditioning.

In elementary school, I was, by no means, a "gender bender." Simply put, like many other boys, I was uncomfortable with many of the norms I was expected to fulfill. I didn't really think of challenging them, though. Fortunately, by eighth grade, still uncomfortable with prevailing ideas of masculinity and hardly "popular," I found a group of older, eleventh- and twelfth-grade friends that accepted me. Tellingly, they were predominantly queer—lesbians and one gay man. To them, gender roles were games to play, not fixed norms. Likewise, sexuality was something to enjoy, not to repress or confine. I remember at this same time, filling out surveys for sex education class and others, marking the sexual orientation box "undecided." That became one of the most liberating ways that I could think of myself.

I think it was my lesbian friends who taught me best that I could be male, non-traditional, and anti-sexist. In a very concrete way, they showed me that women are not passive sexual objects, but subjects capable of self-determination. And they helped me see that I could be a man, yet not feel threatened by their strength, their assertiveness. To this day, most of my best friends are still strong, assertive women.

Even as my supportive group of queer friends graduated, I didn't forget the lessons that they taught me about my ability to consciously shape my gender and sexual identity.
I certainly don't think that I've escaped "masculine" norms—my friends still tell me that I'm being sexist when I am—but I have been and continue to be critical. And I feel more free for it.

Men's Work
The work we can do to end sex*ism in our lives and communities.

(warning, this may be triggering for abuse survivors)

I kinda like needles, as long as I'm not at the dentist, not for smack, never done that I'm too sensitive to chemicals for that. No just needles, piercing, drawing and giving blood. I love giving blood. I used to go to the blood bank with my friend Jason and we'd race to finish bleeding off a pint. I liked giving blood. I can't now, they don't take faggot blood. "IF YOU HAVE HAD HOMOSEXUAL CONTACT WITH A MALE SINCE 1977, YOU ARE AT HIGH RISK". Fuck you. my dad raped, and used slave brothels in Vietnam, and my mom never touched a condom. That's why I'm at risk.

TWENTY YEARS LATER

by matthew mullinnix

I pulled out the gun I
never ever had
pulled back the hammer
and I shot my fuckin' dad
I saved my life that day
I think I saved my life

Coasting into Safeway
He put his foot down,
The van obeyed
And stopped what it was doing
When he didn't get out
I got nervous
When he said
"We need to have a talk."
I got scared
It meant I was in trouble
"What do you know about sex son?"
What the fuck does that mean?

When I had to suck your dick
And when you shot me with your fat fleshy
gun
In my ass
Wasn't that sex?
What is sex?
Maybe I should've shot him with that
QUESTION
Instead I shot another hole in my head,
Another hole in my memory,
My whole life.
That's how I saved my self
By shooting myself in the head
I just forgot
"What do I know about sex? I know enough"
I'd had enough
I'd known too much
Though that didn't matter
"Well okay"
So we went shopping
We bought flesh
He dealt in flesh
Family and animal
He consumed flesh & memory
He taught me to consume my flesh with
razors
And my memory with holes
I filled them with pain because it was real

I cut holes in my chest
My arm
My inner thighs
no one noticed
I burnt my fingers with incense
Never matches
Burnt matches smell like shit
They have a sting
Because of that thing
My dad did to me
His ass shitting meat
Plugging up the toilet seat
Like a cork
Like his hand on my mouth
Like the door my mom pounded on
The door with out a lock
Screaming
"Mike let me in. Open this door"
frantic
There was no lock on that door
That smell, burnt matches
Covering up the smell
Meat shit
Flesh shit
He consumed me
My ass
Plowing
Plowing my ass like his land his field
Private property
Keep out
He has a gun

I never pulled the trigger
Of the gun I Never ever had
I think i save my life that day
But I never shot my dad

me more likely of being a perpetrator also. I tried to ignore the fact that I had sexually assaulted a girlfriend of mine. Blaming the victim was a way that I tried to deal with the shame I felt.

My life didn't really get off to a great start. As I've mentioned, I was abused by men and women when I was younger. At the same time, I've had it good in a lot of ways too. My self-centeredness spurred along my resistance to feminism in the way that I didn't want to hear about anyone elses pain. The world owed me. It made me angry when people were talking about their own problems instead of making mine better. When women talked about men doing this and that, self-centered me took it as a personal attack.

The stereotype of women having more intimate friendships and greater freedom of emotional expression made me envious and jealous. I wanted those things. When women talked about their inequalities, I denied them by responding, "Yeah but at least you can have close friends and you can cry." It was all about me and my pain. I tried to take center stage and have someone feel sorry for me (part of my desire is a legitimate need for my pain to be heard but if I deny or minimize someone else's pain in the process, it is hurtful self-centeredness). It is very rude to explain to someone that they shouldn't feel angry or upset because they have this or that advantage. Explaining away the pain is "blaming the victim" again and a way to clear myself of responsibility of the pain I have inflicted. It is also self-centered because listening and being empathetic mean that I share some of that pain and I didn't want to do that.



Hopefully this has exposed my resistance to feminism and my misogyny a bit. I'm a little more secure with myself today and try not to assume I know another person's experience. When women talk with me about their pains of growing up and living in a sexist society, I listen. My guilt and shame and insecurity still rise up, but I just pay attention to them and put them aside so I can be more empathetic and compassionate. I do not deny my own pain and hopefully I don't portray women as goddesses and men as devils. The story is more complicated than men are perpetrators and women are victims. Men are suffering greatly in this society also, but it is time for me and other men to stop transferring this suffering to women.

I've been tired of my anger and self-centered guilt and fear getting in the way of connecting with women as well as men. My first idea for this paper was to write about men's resistance to feminism. I chose to write my personal experiences because blaming other men won't solve anything and attempting to relieve my burden of guilt by writing in third person won't help me grow. Hiding by telling my story as if it was someone else is lying and these dark things I hate about myself need to be revealed and brought into the light. When I ignore uncomfortable aspects of myself, I'm not paying attention to them. When I 'm not paying attention to them, they can manifest and hurt others while I'm not looking. Only by being brutally honest about who I am can I stop hurting others and consequently myself.

do to my father or to other boys.

Masculinity plays a big part in all of this. From early on I got a sense of competition of us (men) verses them (women). My Dad used to put down my Mom a lot. He also modeled the cocky arrogance and biting sarcasm which I took on. I felt as If I was in alliance with all the men in the world when I put my Mom down. This is about as close to feeling masculine as I had gotten. Being cool and in control and dominant were things I was supposed to do as a man and so I tried to prove my superiority where I could. I felt less than to most men so I couldn't attack them and since women were "the weaker sex" I chose them as my target. My Mom and Dad played out the scenario male dominance and cruelty so I felt it was natural for me to claim my dominance by hurting her.

It has been hard for me to define these behaviors as sexist. After all, I have acted like a real asshole to different men in my life and acted as if they were not as good as me the same as I have to women. So why not just say that I was a jerk all around? Because it doesn't explain why I've done this to women much more often than to men. I think some of it comes from my attempts to be masculine. Part of the masculinity I learned emphasized that men were better than women and were supposed to dominate (abuse) them to display this superiority. The less masculine I felt, the greater the need I felt to prove it. Consequently, I acted more cruelly to me mother and sister.

Feminism challenged what little illusions of power and control I had. My position has been that of male white, upper-middle class, raised Christian, able-bodied, seemingly heterosexual, reasonably attractive and thin. What I heard from feminism was that I had a lot of privilege and control. I felt like I was powerless though and feminism was going to take away the little power I had. I'll address this a little more later.

The guilt part of my resistance to feminism is a tough one to talk about. It is in response to hearing women talk about how badly they have been treated by men and different things they didn't like about men. It is somewhat of an odd thing (when put in context with my misogyny), but I was always close with my female friends and really sensitive to their needs. So I heard about the pain and suffering and the inequality they experienced. It made me very sad hearing how they were treated. I even got angry at society or particular boys with them and for them. The hard thing about hearing their pain was hearing them talk about different things which boys had done to them that I had done to other women.

"All that guys want is sex." I have heard this one over and over and in such a bitter tone of someone too hurt to feel sad. I always enjoyed non-sexual affection and craved emotional intimacy (even though I knew nothing about it) so I was able to convince myself that "I wasn't like the other boys." My female friends always remarked how I was a nice guy and all that stuff and in a lot of ways I really was. In other ways, I was really good at hiding the not so great qualities of myself. Yes I wanted intimacy but I also wanted to have sex with many women. I stared at girls body parts and abused them in my own mind. Not that being sexual and having desire are abusive, but when I turn a girl into a body part, it is.

Blaming the victim is one of the most disgusting and cruel things to me today. Nothing angers me more than a woman who was raped being interrogated by questions like: "What were you wearing?" "How much did you have to drink?" "Why did you go over to his house alone?" They are all questions which attempt to relieve the perpetrator of responsibility. I used to think these same questions. It made me uncomfortable to think that a lot of guys were rapists (1 out of 3 women is sexually assaulted in her life and each on has a perpetrator) because it made

I had a friend once who was gay. I told my folks about him, so when i told them we were going to go hang out, it triggered a fight that ended up with my blood on my shoes. Dripping all the way back it trickled through the holes in my memory dripping back to the roots drying there leaving a rust brown trail through maze of Swiss cheese memories. Bloody roots. When i try to remember i feel like I'm standing in an empty house with flat colorless walls that keep out the past. The door out is terrifying, so i can't even see it. The windows I can at least see. Not necessary see out, but at least see. Most are like bathroom windows the kind that are frosty, you can see movement but nothing clear. They're like the kind in my dads bedroom bath. Where i first saw a penis other than mine, it was probably his but the the window gets frosty before I can tell. Others have Venetian blinds, like the new green ones that shut the ghetto, Five Points, and all of the people that lived there out of my apartment. To me they were dangerous, drug dealers, helpless faceless victims of racism, but above all, black, regardless of their color. To them I think i was a big red brick building with forest green and vanilla trim. Full of rich white people waiting to accumulate enough money to buy their houses, and park our S.U.V.'s- in their driveways while we marvel how far our neighborhood has come and how it used to be so "bad". I used to sit on the roof 22 stories up with a pen laser. I'd chase the kids hanging out on the corner with that little red dot.

"Man it was so funny seeing those dealers scatter like that".

funny, huh?

They thought they were gonna get shot at. But me, well my building had a security door and a security guard. Shit, it was just a joke, but I knew I was safe. That window of memory is relatively clear. But most of the windows in my house of memory I still can't see, they're like the door, so devastating I'm not allowed to see them.

This paper was really hard for me to write. Mostly because I don't really have access to my memory. I remember one birthday before the age of 20. It's not just the lack of memories that made this so hard. I felt like I had to tell all the fucked up, racist, sexist, classist garbage, that I've done in my life. Like I had to confess that I think maybe I sexually assaulted the first girl I ever dated. Like I had to confess to class, to let y'all know I shouldn't be allowed to carry this feminist badge. I also can't figure out why I feel like I should be confessing to a class and professor I really don't know and don't really trust.

The Making of A Man

Sam Pullen

When I was in the sixth grade, I began learning how to be a man. I had just joined the Boy Scouts with a friend from my church, and the troop convinced us that it would be a good experience to spend a week during the summer at Camp Matigwa. We camped out in rustic army tents, started the day with a salute to the American flag, ate meals at the mess hall, learned how to use pocketknives and start fires, and earned merit badges at Camp Matigwa, a place which according to its motto is known as the "Maker of Men".

My week at Matigwa was an intensive training in the dominant norms of masculinity. Each day was filled with activities that reinforced a macho, heterosexual image of manhood. In the shower room of the pool we compared penis sizes and made fun of the scouts who didn't yet have pubic hair. Every single one of us had a crush on one of the counselors, because she happened to be the only female counselor in the entire camp. The Counselors-In-Training caught a raccoon, doused it with gasoline, and laughed as they lit it on fire and watched it run about in flames. In the afternoon, by the man-made lake, we caught frogs and hacked them apart; sometimes to use as bait for fishing and other times just for fun. During rest hour, when we were supposed to write letters to our parents, we passed around the Playboy magazine. My friend smoked pot for the first time one afternoon. The men produced by Camp Matigwa are confident, militant, obedient, and they all share common goals: to lust after women and to be leaders in their community.

One of the ironies of my involvement in the boy scouts is that it was the first place that I learned many skills that I considered to be feminine. In preparation for overnight campouts we had to write a menu, go shopping for groceries, and then cook the meals ourselves. I also learned the basics of sewing, because we had to sew badges onto our uniforms and mend equipment that was in need of repair. Yet the attitude behind these activities was not to challenge gender roles and move toward equality, but rather to produce men who were self-reliant and independent, who would be capable of providing leadership (dominating) in any setting.

My training in masculinity continued the next summer when I went to Philmont Scout Ranch in New Mexico and spent ten days backpacking with an all male crew. On the bus trip to Philmont we stopped in Colorado and went on a tour of NORAD Air Force Base, a highly militarized fortress located inside of a mountain, which is where the president of the United States would be protected in the event of nuclear war. These activities reinforced an ideal of manhood that views military service as the epitome of patriotism, asserts that married heterosexuality is the only moral relationship, and teaches men to be leaders in a way that disregards the voices of women and anyone of an inferior rank.

At this time I did not question my involvement with the Boy Scouts and by eighth grade I was the Senior Patrol Leader of my troop. I enjoyed to the fullest the time that I spent camping, going on field trips, and doing community service projects with the other scouts. I had advanced through the ranks and was well on my way to becoming an Eagle scout, the highest rank in

My Resistatnce To Feminism



Whine. Whine. Whine. Like your life is THAT horrible. You should be grateful you've got it as good as you do. I remember learning about the old days when women couldn't wear pants, let alone vote. Not to mention the fact that you get to choose whether you want to stay at home or work if you want. I HAVE to work no matter what. And it's hard work too. I'm the one who is gonna get drafted if another war comes, not you. Whose conversation is this? It's the conversation I had against (not with) women not too many years ago. Nobody engaged this conversation; I just had it in my head.

If someone threw kitty pooh at you every day as you left your house, you might be slightly relieved if the person decided to only throw kitty pooh at you three days of the week. You would be getting less kitty pooh thrown at you, but it doesn't mean that getting pooh thrown on you three days a week doesn't suck. I guess that's the part I missed. Just because women's lives are a bit better today, doesn't mean that there is equality and justice for them.

I guess I would say that I was a misogynist. Writing that in the past tense feels really good because it implies that I am not one today. Maybe I'm a little too biased to assess my relation to misogyny because my desire not to be one gets in the way. The thing is, I have changed drastically in the beginning adulthood. I have more respect and empathy for women today, but just like the kitty pooh story; better does not equate okay.

Before I go any further, I want to say that I hated men as well. Since we know that we there is no convenient word like misogyny which corresponds to men*, I give myself the label that I was a man hater. The reason I have been a man hater is that I had been abused by men as a child. In a more abstract way, struggling with my masculinity and being judged by other men helped me hate the whole lot of them. I'm an equal opportunity victim though. Women have abused by women as a child and an adult.

It would be accurate to say that the things people did to me led me to feel anger towards both sexes. However, my resistance to feminism and my misogyny can't be explained as a result of being hurt by women (men had abused me worse). Self-centeredness, insecurity, and guilt are the starting point of my explanation.

My Mom was the first victim of my insecurity. I had a real lack of self worth and I tried to prove that I was better than someone to make myself feel better. The thing is, hurting people doesn't really make me feel any better. At around eight years old I began calling my Mom stupid and treating her as an inferior. I was really cocky and would have arguments with her and my sister with cruelty and stubbornness. I did some really mean things to them which I didn't

* I just got really angry at the word misogyny and the lack of a male counterpart. I mean, I've heard women say how odd or something it was that there was no male version, but never really heard much more than that expressed. Misogyny is such a sterile and impotent word compared to its meaning hatred of women. It is so streamlined it could almost float by without notice. But man hater, (even without the bold font) conjures up images of violence and aggression in my mind. When I hear the word misogynist, I imagine a mostly harmless guy who is somewhat bitter towards women. Is this a coincidence? Who creates the words anyhow?

find.

Riot Grrrl wasn't focused on men, or challenging sexism as much as it was focused on making the space for women to build community and healing relationships. I was deeply inspired by the actions many riot grrrls were taking in their lives and communities, and wanted something similar for me. I wrote a letter in a popular punk magazine where I asked the question "if riot grrrl is for girls, then what is there for boys?" This question lead me on a quest to find something that was healing for men- something that would help me deal with the isolation and alienation I felt as a boy, and the loneliness I felt as a man.

There was a riot grrrl convention being planned for Chicago, by a few of the women I was living with. Many men, feeling left out because the convention was for women only, called our house to ask why. My roommates at the time, confident that I could answer the question for them, gave many of those calls to me. I decided to host a one day discussion and support group for men who wanted to take part in some events during the riot grrrl convention. This was my first step in taking my self-awareness process into the community I was a part of. Twenty men came, and it was a success. We talked about sex, violence, love, and told many stories of our lives. I felt connected to each of these guys and for the first time in my life, at the age of 20, I didn't feel an air of competitiveness between me and the men around me.

Through riot grrrl and feminism I began to learn more about the consequences of sexism and sexual violence. I began to learn that what I had gone through as a man was very normal in this society and that many men around me, in many different communities face the same issues. I took these lessons into my own life and took space in my life to learn about my past and the lessons I learned while growing up. I also took the space to connect with other men around me, through discussion groups or just for hot chocolate. I began to make close friendships, and learned how to work for healthy relationships. Now, I am forever indebted to riot grrrl and feminism for changing my life in very positive ways. And as I continue to struggle with the ways I was socialized as a man, I have new skills to deal with the challenges in my life and to take my struggles day by day.



scouting.

If it weren't for the influence of two of my friends, the Boy Scouts might have made me into man who never questioned the dominant norms of masculinity. I was fortunate to become close friends with a boy who was very committed to social justice and environmental activism. He challenged me to do volunteer work without recognition rather than just do "good deeds" in order to earn awards and a higher rank. He also taught me that true leadership was not about taking charge, but about building community and empowering people who are systematically oppressed.



My girlfriend during high school had the most influence on my views about masculinity. She was an outspoken feminist who challenged the militant, sexist attitudes that I was exposed to in the Boy Scouts. She knew personally how such attitudes led to the oppression of women, because her father began abusing his wife after he returned from the Vietnam War. Her father's understanding of masculinity was so sick that he used violence to force his wife and three daughters to cook him meals, clean his house and satisfy his sexual urges.

By the time I was in high school I had shifted most of my involvement with the Boy Scouts into environmental activism and volunteer work at an emergency shelter for youth from abusive homes. I also helped my girlfriend challenge homophobia in the public schools and defend a school board clause of non-discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation. I was deliberately using the organizing skills I had learned in the Boy Scouts to challenge the sexism, homophobia, and violence that is perpetuated by the Boy Scouts.

But by the end of my Junior year I had completed most of the requirements to be an Eagle Scout and was being pressured by my parents, teachers, and scoutmaster to finish my Eagle project so that I could be recognized for earning the highest rank in Scouting. At this point I faced the biggest barrier in my scouting career, and it was not lack of skills, lack of time, or the inability to be a leader—it was my conscience.

I knew that the Boy Scouts had a policy of not awarding Eagle to anyone who was openly gay, and that it wouldn't allow a gay man to be a scoutmaster. For several months I seriously questioned my own sexuality and spoke with my friends and mentors about what I should do. I realized that I needed to "come out" about my sexuality, either as straight, bi, or gay. Although I was fairly certain that on a sexual level I was only attracted to females, I knew that I was emotionally attracted to many of my male friends and open to physical intimacy. I was aware of the tremendous privilege and responsibility I had to choose my identity based on the dictates of my body and my conscience. The only thing I was certain of was that I would not conform to the mainstream standard of heterosexuality.

At a conference for queer youth and supporters I met a gay man who told me about a national group made up of gay Eagle Scouts that was actively challenging the homophobia within the Boy Scouts. He encouraged me to accept the Eagle award, but to challenge the institution at the same time. As a straight male I would have a lot of leverage that could help the Gay Eagles as they pursue legal action to challenge the homophobia of the Boy Scouts. Based on this reasoning I decided to complete the requirements for Eagle, to write a

statement challenging the Boy Scouts, and if they still award me the Eagle rank, I could always turn in my badge at some time in the future when it would serve as a critical statement against the Boy Scouts.

My family was aware of my struggles, and as liberals they could see that the Scouts should be challenged for their exclusive and prejudiced position. However, they did not necessarily agree with my insistence on a radical act of defiance. I agreed to let my family plan the Eagle ceremony if I could have a chance to make a statement before the troop before I accepted the award. In the end, my family showed their understanding and progressive politics by a planning a ceremony that was, in many ways, subversive to the espoused ideals of the Boy Scouts.

To open the ceremony, before we said the Pledge of Allegiance, a lesbian couple who are close family friends performed a ritual to invoke the elements of the four directions. My four closest female friends each brought an object to the stage representing Fire, Earth, Water, and Air. Then we proceeded through the normal Boy Scout rituals of repeating the Scout Oath and Scout Law while lighting candles. At the point where a member of the community was to speak on my leadership qualities, I asked my mentor in activism to speak on my behalf (he was the only adult I knew who confronted me when I told him I was in the Boy Scouts). He praised me as a co-worker in the struggle for peace, civil rights, and justice and entrusted me with the responsibility of working with existing institutions when they do good and challenging them when they are wrong. Before I read my statement, my grandmother, the matriarch of our family, read a poem that she had written about the Eagle who flies high, has a long range vision, and SCREAMS at what is wrong.

At this point I delivered a three page statement that I had prepared to thank the troop for honoring me with the eagle award, recognize the many people who helped me with my Eagle project, share some wisdom with younger scouts, and to state my criticisms of scouting before the entire troop. This was the heart of my statement:

> Often scouts are confronted with peer pressure that scouting is not cool, is a waste of time, or that the uniforms are really geeky. Those types of comments didn't bother me, because I was having to much fun going on hikes outside, building fires, and sleeping under the stars to care what anyone else thought. However, I was confronted by many of my peers who were concerned that the Boy Scouts is a pre-military institution filled with commands and ranks, were angered with the Boy Scouts treatment homosexual men, and who were aware that women often have a limited role in the scouting experience.
>
> I am the first to stand up for the values and virtues of scouting, but I believe that as an institution, the Boy Scouts must be confronted for the role it plays in fostering hostility and prejudice toward people who are homosexual, especially gay youth and gay men. It is a tragedy that as an institution, the Boy Scouts will not offer its valuable skills and experiences to openly gay youth, and it is also a shame and an act of irresponsibility on the part of the Boy Scouts to perpetuate a myth that gay men are inclined toward pedophilia and are inevitably a threat to youth. This simply is not true, for a statistical breakdown of sexual offenders in Iowa shows that over 90% of child molestation

found me at 3 am and dragged me home and attempted to sober me up. I woke up on the first and with my intense hangover I vowed never to touch the stuff again.

I took a leave of absence from my friends, and from everyone around me. I sat in my room all the time, listened to music and wrote in my journal. Around the same time I discovered the straight edge movement. This movement was full of people who considered themselves good because they claimed to not consume anything harmful to their bodies. I was looking for something new at the time because of the new changes in my life. After I got over the original withdrawal from the substances I was taking I started to feel a little more hopeful. So I found some straight edge friends and joined their group.

I thought I was doing something positive. I was turning my life around. I wasn't a burnout anymore and that was a big step. What I didn't see was the new social rules I was taking on. In straight edge, just like in many sub-cultures, there are different social rules. There are different rules for what it means to be a man. There are rules though, and these rules, like the ones from the media are confining. Once again, I tried to fit in, and couldn't. I fought in the mosh pit, tried to learn the lyrics to everyone's favorite straight edge songs, etc. The people I hung out with were really macho about being drug-free, and condemned others for not living their chosen life-style.

Once again, I passed through a new social group with different rules for the same ways of being. I left straight-edge and found "emo." This new group of people brought themselves together in the punk music scene around the fact that we had emotions and weren't scared to express them. In the emo scene, many of the guys were really repressed sexually and emotionally. Bands would get up on stage and have panic attacks as a stage show. Bands who "lost their shit" the hardest were the most popular. It was a really unhealthy way of dealing with all the angst in most of our lives.

This phase took me in for a long time. I found a way to repress the loneliness I felt from not fitting in for most of my life. I found another coping mechanism for the emotional problems I was facing in my life. Once again this coping mechanism was very macho-masculine, in that I learned how to cover up my feelings instead of dealing with them.



Through emo I found riot grrrl, and ultimately feminism. Riot Grrrl was a radical young women's feminist movement in the punk scene that confronted much of the sexism, violence, and repression that was so prevalent within all facets of punk. Being confronted by many women in my life mimicked the care and concern my burnout friends had for me when they forced me to quit drugs. These confrontations made me take a look at my life and see what I was doing with myself. I was woken up to the way I had been socialized as a man in this society, and I was told to look deeply into this socialization to see what I

Turning point

By basil

I've been struggling with my manhood for as long as I can remember. Growing up in this society in this time for men can be difficult. There were many pressures I was scorned for not living up to. I wasn't handsome enough. I wasn't strong enough. I wasn't cool, calm, or collected enough. I didn't fit in with most of my male peers, and I thought it was all my fault.

When I was six or seven years old, I started to believe that I wasn't good enough. I was already doubtful of my abilities to perform- to keep up with my friends, whether it be knowing all the names of the members of our favorite bands or playing football or soccer. At such a young age I believed that I wasn't "man enough". I started to hate myself, push myself in ways I wouldn't recommend for any child, and think about suicide.

I lived not only under the pressure of my friends, but the pressures of the media, and my family. Society along with my family and friends were controlling. I wasn't given the space within these structures to find myself and explore my natural emotions or other ways of being. I was confined to their expectations, and therefore never felt like I could "measure up".

For a long time, I got down on myself. I tried harder and harder as each year passed to live up to the expectations of everyone around me. I tried to dress the part, act the part, etc. but nothing worked. So I gave up.

Finally, I told myself that I would never be good enough. I told myself that I was just a fuck up, and I dropped out. I became a burnout. I used drugs and drank alcohol all the time when I was 14, 15, and 16 years old. I lost many friends and hurt many people because of who I was becoming. I didn't act like I really cared about anything or anyone. I built up a shell around me.

Then I broke down. I was really burnt out on drugs and my life and was increasingly suicidal. While my friend Brad played chicken with a freight train one night, I thought that it wouldn't be a big deal if I died. I convinced myself that night that I wasn't worth living but was too drunk to do anything about it. I hit an all time low.

My close friends made a pact without me that if I didn't quit the drugs and get my shit together they would abandon me. They decided that they couldn't deal with me giving up on myself like that, and that they were going to try to do this for me. That was it for me. I thought that I already fucked up with my life. I didn't want to lose my friends.

For my new years resolution, after I turned 16, I decided that I would quit smoking, drinking alcohol and doing all drugs. December 31, 1991 I got so wasted I passed out in a field on the way to my house. My parent's

is caused by heterosexual men. The Boy Scouts must always be concerned about the safety and well-being of its members, but this is not achieved by targeting gay men with lies and bigotry. Fortunately, the Mid-Iowa Council adheres to a policy of non-discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation as a condition for its affiliation as a United Way organization. However, further steps must be taken to change the discriminatory, anti- gay practices of the boy scouts and insure that the Boy Scouts is a place of respect for all people.

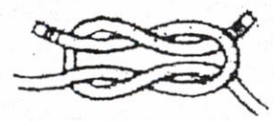
For those of you who may be shocked or offended that I have made such a bold and confrontive statement at my Eagle ceremony, I just want to say that I would collapse with guilt and shame like Schindler did during the Holocaust if I did not stand up for the many friends, family members, and role models of mine who are gay, lesbian or bisexual. It is wrong that so many beautiful, loving and inspirational people should suffer from the hatred and exclusion of a society that is very ignorant when it comes to respecting the differences of others.

So now, I am reaching out to all of you here today who have been such a tremendous inspiration to me as I have gone trough the ranks of scouting, and I hope with all of my heart that you can understand that it is not because I am straight that I am deserving as an eagle scout, but because I believe in the Boy Scouts and am committed to making the world a better place.

It was, indeed, quite a shock to many of those present to hear these words coming from my mouth. I could see many of the other scouts, their parents, and the adult leadership of the troop squirming in their seats as I suggested that openly gay youth and gay scoutmasters should be allowed in the Boy Scouts. At the same time I could sense my friends and family cheering me on as I took a stand on my beliefs, with my activist friend and my girlfriend present as my proudest supporters.

A few days later I got a letter from the Chief Scout Executive of the Mid-Iowa Council of the Boy Scouts of America, who had been present at the Eagle Ceremony. It said that he disagreed with the statements I made and that it was irresponsible of me to use the Eagle ceremony as pulpit for my personal beliefs. But that letter was just a slight reprisal. As far as I know, I am a still able to put "Eagle Scout, highest rank in Scouting" on my resume and gain access to one of the most elite and decadent old-boy networks in the world.

Almost three years after receiving my Eagle award, I am still grappling with what it means to be a blond-haired, blue-eyed Anglo-American male from an upper-class family who has been bestowed with about as much privilege as it is possible to have in this world's hierarchy of oppression. I have done everything I can to use my privilege for good, but I know that it is still not enough. I know that every day I will be confronted with the injustices of the world and in my mirror I will see my role in perpetuating those injustices. It is my hope to dedicate my life to the struggle for peace and justice, and in so doing to experience the true greatness of the human spirit.



Changing Ways

redefining manhood.

"A Vision of New Masculinity"
by Cooper Thompson

Boys must learn to accept their vulnerability, learn to express a range of emotions such as fear and sadness, and learn to ask for help and support.

Boys must learn to be gentle, nurturing, cooperative and communicative, and in particular, learn non-violent means of resolving conflicts.

Boys must learn to accept those attitudes and behaviors which have traditionally been labelled feminine as necessary for full human development-thereby reducing homophobia and misogyny. This is tantamount to teaching boys to love other boys and girls.

From New Men. New Minds
ed. Franklin Abbott